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THE SOCIAL ORIGINS OF FAILURE - MORPHOGENESIS OF
EDUCATIONAL AGENCY IN THE CAPE COLONY

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A Thesis submitted in fulfillment of
the requirements of the degree of
Ph.D. in Sociology

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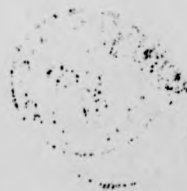


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SUMMARY

This study is an investigation into the failure of dominant social agents to achieve social objectives through control over the educational sphere. The Morphogenetic Approach, developed by British sociologist Margaret Archer, is utilized to explore the educational agency of dominant groups in the Cape Colony over the period from 1652 to approximately 1860. The general objective is to gain greater insight into the complex relations between, on the one hand, structural and ideological factors, and on the other hand, features of social agents as collectivities who hold particular ideas and institutional positions in relation to the education service provided. This information is, then, utilized to explore the morphogenetic origins of failure, i.e. as emerging from the complex interaction between parts of the social system.

This study makes a contribution by applying the morphogenetic perspective in a new context; utilizing the pre-colonial and other subsequent historical context to explore the pre-conditioning effect of past interaction on later interaction; revisiting well-known material to arrive at new conclusions from the morphogenetic perspective and introducing the morphogenesis / transformation of agency as source of failure; and it considers the implied strategic considerations for successful agency.

The methodology of the study was determined by the nature of the morphogenetic perspective. In the way utilized here, the morphogenetic approach was a method for analyzing the relationships between components of a social system.

The study contains two major divisions: Section A contains the development of the theoretical equipment for the application on the Cape Colony in Section B. The theoretical work involves separate consideration being given to the role of overall social features, institutional structure, ideational features and features of agent in the success/failure of agency. Particular attention is given to the changes that occur among the above and how it serves to explain the failure of agency.

The general conclusion arrived at is that failure of agency is inevitable, if by success is meant the complete victory of one agent over others in terms of the achievement of the objectives set by such an agent at the outset of the interaction between the groups involved. Morphogenetic processes are responsible for modifications in both the context and the groups, and even the most powerful dominant agent cannot prevent the unintended outcome of interaction over a prolonged period of time.

PREFACE

While this study is in many ways a typical sociological thesis, the text is structured and organized in such a way that some introductory remarks may be required to guide the reader. For this purpose the text is prefaced with some explanatory comments about (1) the structure and style of the thesis and their link to the contents (including an overview of the thesis content as a guide for the reader), (2) the way in which Margaret Archer's work is presented and used in the text and (3) the approach followed in the selection and use of sources.

(1) This study is structured in sections and sub-sections with simple numbering, sometimes with unnumbered headings and with an absence of chapters. The intention is to facilitate the flow of the text which has a thematic 'storyline', even in the theory sections. Admittedly, this complicates the text for the reader in search of a set of neatly compartmentalized components. The reader is best advised to read the text as a whole, in order to grasp the unfolding 'storyline'. There are no excuses or apologies for this approach, but the reasons for adopting it need explanation.

On the one hand, I deliberately intended to present the text

in a way that corresponded with the theoretical logic of the study. From the outset, the intention was to integrate the text, to an even greater extent than the form it finally took, in order to reflect the analytical distinctions made and to correspond to the methodological stance adopted. The implications of the latter are that the components of social systems, whilst analytically differentiated from interaction, nevertheless, cannot be examined in isolation from it. Indeed, their mutual interrelationship defies representation in terms of simple causal relations between fully autonomous components. By organizing the text in this way, the aim was to maintain its coherence as a whole. Equally, the structure of the text mirrors an unfolding dialogue between theory and substantive material. Thus, the theoretical sections of the text were always approached with diverse historical applications in mind. In parallel, particular theory sections (for instance, those dealing with structural variables) were always approached with related theory sections in mind (for instance, those concerned with features of agents).

Besides this integrated style of presentation, both the theoretical and historical sections contain a 'storyline'. Writing the text in the form of separate chapters could have had the effect of breaking the flow of the arguments. The storyline in the theoretical section (Section A) follows

from the identification of a particularly important phenomenon, i.e. the persistent failure, especially of dominant groups in the history of South Africa to achieve their stated objectives through their agential intervention in education (Introduction: Setting the Scene). The discussion of this is set on course by considering how the 'failure of agency' is dealt with in social theory; relevant but recurring problems in social theorizing are identified (Section A, sub-section 2) and then the morphogenetic perspective is offered as an alternative way forward (Section A, sub-section 3). After a brief introduction to the morphogenetic perspective, the text is structured around two scenarios, the morphostasis and morphogenesis (Section A, sub-section 4 and 5). In the case of the former, the aim is to explore the conditions that facilitate the success of dominant groups as educational agents and the question is answered with reference to the features of agents themselves together with structural arrangements and ideational conditions prevailing under morphostatic or oppressive conditions. In each case separate subsections are devoted to the discussion of these elements, but each is to be understood with reference to the other. The morphogenetic scenario is then presented, not so much as separate from the morphostatic scenario, but as working simultaneously and within the context of the morphostasis - with the effect of complicating the social arrangements which initially

favoured the success of dominant educational agency.

Again, the presentation contains structural, ideational and agential variables.

As for the linkage between the theoretical and historical sections of the text, the morphostatic scenario is presented as an ideal-typical description of social and institutional arrangements like the colonial, apartheid and other closed, totalitarian or oppressive forms of society or institutional arrangements. On the other hand, morphogenetic processes are presented as a source of the failure of dominant groups in the sense that they result in the introduction of the unintended outcomes of interaction between different components of social systems which diverge from, dilute or distort the objectives of the dominant agents.

Section B of the text on the history is organized around projects envisaged for and attempted in education by successive dominant agents. The objective is to identify, in the case of both the Dutch period and the British periods of Colonial rule (sub-sections 2 and 3 respectively), the morphogenetic reasons why the respective dominant groups could not succeed in achieving the educational outcomes that they set out to attain.

The study is concluded by applying the same framework of

ideas to more recent developments in South Africa.

(2) At particular points (which are indicated in the text), the prose used bears a close resemblance to that of Margaret Archer (1979-1989). While careful reading will show that Archer's exact words are not actually used and that there is in fact only a close resemblance, again, no apologies are offered for the way in which her work is presented and employed, for good reasons can be provided for the practice adopted. In the first place, this derives from the decision to accept Archer's conceptual framework and to retain the original meaning given to the concepts used. There is a close connection between the conceptual framework developed by Archer and the prose that she uses and, arguably, the meaning of concepts in many ways cannot be divorced from the language in which they are defined, explicated and deployed. Secondly, as a purely pragmatic matter of thesis-writing, I saw no good reason to undertake the exercise of finding words to replace Archer's words since for the purposes of this study, I accepted Archer's concepts as used by her. In any case, it is much more important to note that the intention of this study was never to offer a critique or modification of Archer's theory and conceptual framework. This is another task altogether and this thesis did not provide the space for such an exercise. Instead, it is concerned with using the framework offered by Archer to

explore substantive matters other than those which are explored in her work.

Besides applying the morphogenetic perspective and the accompanying conceptual framework to events outside the European context, it is also more pointedly applied to the notions of success and failure of agency. Thus, in the context of my own concerns, the reformulation of distinctions provided by Archer would have been superfluous, and would also have issued in a type of theoretical critique for which there is neither space in this text nor a need in this thesis. Instead, the sections in the text which are signalled as bearing a close resemblance to Archer reflect the fact that a 'businesslike' approach was taken to the conceptual tools involved in order to press forward with more creative work. In any case, one can reasonably assume that Archer sees as one of the main purposes of her work the attempt to consolidate a basic analytical framework for sociological work, in that theories and concepts are being developed which other researchers are invited to develop further by using them in different substantive contexts. The decision to use the morphogenetic perspective should not be seen as suggesting that it is regarded as a finalized social theory. The study is an exercise which involves a novel application of the morphogenetic perspective. To that extent, the morphogenetic approach has proved to be useful

and undoubtedly holds potential for further application in this and other areas. But while I believe that the morphogenetic perspective is based on sound theoretical foundations and has a practical utility which can be underestimated, the expression of such a belief should not be taken out of context. My own concern was with the relative utility of theories available with a particular application in mind. Hence, for instance, the work of Giddens (1979, 1984) is also considered, not so much for its general quality as for its capacity to explain the failure of agency. It is not part of the present project to enter into the level of critical evaluation of contributions to social theorizing in general terms. Even so, it cannot be denied that there are at least differences of emphasis and degree between this study and the work of Archer. Fundamentally, the approach followed in this study accentuates not the primary morphogenesis of structure and culture but rather the "double morphogenesis" in which agents transform themselves as they strive for socio-cultural transformation. Hence, the thematic focus on the failure of agency points to a comparatively greater concern with agential outcomes and outcomes of agency. In particular, references to the indeterminacy of social action, the reflexive capacity of human beings and the role of the unintended variables are all indications of my particular cautiousness about avoiding any drift towards

structuralist theorizing. Nevertheless, it must immediately be stated that such an approach does not clash with that of Archer, if her work is seen as providing an analytical framework which allows for diverse applications and the emphasis of one's own choice.

(3) Regarding the **selection and use of sources**, it will be noted that most of those used in the historical section of the text are secondary sources. In this instance, too, no apologies are offered because it must be clear, from the outset, that this study is not intended to be a history of education in the Cape Colony. Instead, the objective was to focus on the 'projects' of agency in order to come to an understanding of the reasons for their success or failure. This study is an exercise in sociological theory rather than a history of education. The verification of detailed historical material was not of primary importance here and in most cases secondary sources were adequate for the purpose in hand.

Nevertheless, while using secondary sources, care was taken in order that one could at least feel confident that sufficient relevant sources were covered and that the ones selected for particular attention were selected on the basis of justifiable criteria. The criteria applied related to availability, general acceptance, variety and argumentative

quality. A few remarks on each of these :

(i) In some cases the sources used were virtually the only texts available and useable for the purpose. A good example is the work of Malherbe (1925) on educational developments in the Dutch and the British periods. There are a number of other sources that could be used in the field on the earliest educational developments, but they all have their particular limitations. Despite consulting these (like Rose and Tunmer (1975) ; Behr and MacMillan (1966)) one ended up drawing mainly upon Malherbe (1925) because his contribution contains significantly more substance on the matter.

(ii) Other sources were used because they are 'standard' works which in certain cases provided one with some security about the quality of the content (particularly in the case of historical literature like that of Malherbe (1925). Equally however, some works in this category are also associated with a particular theoretical interpretation (like Molteno in Kalaway (1984)) with which it is necessary to enter into debate when a novel theoretical position is being advanced.

(iii) Sources were also selected in order to introduce a variety of points of view into the text. Of course, many sources and references to them disappeared with the editing

of sections in order to solve the problem of volume. Thus the pool of influence is much greater than is reflected in the text. Since much of the information about educational matters had to be extracted from more general texts, attention was given to the introduction of variety by using work from across the ideological spectrum. The important point is that, after having taken this broad approach, I was satisfied that the arguments I advanced received substantiation from a from a wide range of work rather than only a narrow.

Finally, (iv) in the case of more interpretative sources which addressed the issues raised in this study, the evaluation of sources focussed primarily on the obvious criterion of argumentative quality.

A major challenge posed by this study was to achieve a workable compromise between the volume of the text and the scope of the theme. The points discussed in this preface are mainly the outcome of decisions that had to be taken in order to narrow down and give a workable focus to the study without compromising in terms of academic quality.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE SCENE

1. Domination, Transformation and the Failure of Educational Agency in South Africa.

Much has been written and said about the intimate relationship between the features of formal education in South Africa and efforts by oppressive political groups to maintain control over the social, political and economic destiny of the majority of the people of South Africa. Still, there is so much that has not been said that the political sociology of South African education, as a field of study, can still be regarded as being in its infancy. This study is an attempt to make a contribution in this field.

This study also represents an entry into the ongoing debate in progressive academic circles about the relationship between education and domination. It kicks off with a criticism of reductionist theorizing commonly encountered in the field, proceeds to challenge the generally assumed success of dominant groups to achieve their social objectives via education, after which it takes up the challenge of developing a theoretical explanation of the 'failure of agency'. Finally, these insights are utilized for the purpose of exploring the success/failure of educational agency in the Cape Colony from the arrival of

the Dutch until approximately 1860.

While the tendency to assume the success of dominant groups pervades work pertaining to all historical epochs, this is a particular feature of academic descriptions of the colonial period. A common procedure of these descriptions is to identify the social aims contained in the educational approach of dominant groups and then to follow with a confirmation of the successful achievement of these aims. For instance, Molteno says that:

Schooling, in general, contributed to separating socially the blacks and whites who economically were increasingly integrated, even though that integration was grossly unequal. Thus, for example, one objective of the Education Act of 1865 was to discourage missions from opening their schools at all, irrespective of colour. This was achieved by permitting state grants to schools which did so to be used only for paying teachers' salaries and leaving the missions responsible for all the expenses. Separate and unequal schooling helped to rigidify racist lines of division which up until the development of capitalist industrialization had still been somewhat loose. Differential schooling for blacks and whites was aimed at moulding the children for their respective dominant and dominated places (in Kalaway, 1984 : 63)

Christie (1986: 43) summarizes the nature of education in the trekker states during the previous century in the following way:

These states set up education systems which reflected their [the ruling group's] needs in those days. Certainly, they met the needs of the ruling groups.

Kalaway (1988: 9-10) stops short of making simple assumptions about the success of dominant agency by stating that :

The schooling of the colonized, whether conducted by the

missionaries or by agents of the colonial government, was part of the process of colonization - the co-option and control of subject groups. Within the colonial context schools became key institutions of control, whereby a new indigenous elite was created to replace the traditional groupings who represented a different culture and political outlook that was often hostile to the culture of and social practices of the conqueror ... [but] it is not our intention to imply that the provision of education simply and unproblematically benefited the colonizers at all times, with no costs being involved.

To the credit of writers like Kalaway, they introduce some form of tentativeness or qualification into their arguments to avoid the simplistic *reproduction thesis*, i.e., that education is effectively used by the dominant groups to reproduce the social conditions that serve their own interests. Nevertheless, their texts are cluttered with prose that confirms a rather unproblematic acceptance of the success of the powerful. The problem starts with such an acceptance of clarity and congruency in the minds of the colonists regarding their exact intentions with the schooling of indigenous people. The highly respected Carnoy (1974: 19), for instance, says that ...

the colonial element in schooling is its attempt to silence, to negate the history of the indigene, to rationalize the irrational and gain acceptance for structures which are oppressive.

Substantially, this study will aim to question whether dominant socio-political groups (agents) in the colonial period of South African history were indeed so clear-minded and successful in achieving the educational and non-educational objectives that they set out to achieve by means of rearranging the existing educational operations and relations.

In this study the historical period from the pre-colonial to approximately 1860 in the history of South African educational politics will be revisited.

Theoretically, the aim of the study is to move beyond the 'simplicity' being referred to and, firstly, to explore the reasons for the failure of agency. The relatively autonomous role of structural variables, ideology and the features of agents will be considered. Secondly, the study is a theoretical exercise in applying the morphogenetic perspective, as developed by British sociologist Margaret Archer, to explain the failure of dominant agency in colonial South Africa.

While it is equally important to apply the arguments to the efforts and actions of groups who oppose, contest or resist domination, the emphasis will be on the failure of dominant agents. Nonetheless, it must immediately be stated that a distinctive characteristic of the morphogenetic perspective is its concern with the mutually-constituting relationship between dominant and oppositional agency. In other words, the success or failure of dominance can only be understood in relation to the success or failure of opposition against the dominant group.

1.1 Education for Domination

Arguing for a greater appreciation of social complexity does not deny the existence of sociologically discernible patterns. Even if such patterns are empirically absent or negligible, the sociologist can hardly operate without such 'data' and may, therefore, have to create them as abstractions from social reality, as suggested by Weber with his notion of idealtypes. However, it is precisely the discernible patterns underlying a falsely perceived pattern of successful dominance that strikes one when reading the social history of South African education.

A historical overview of the socio-political developments in South African education reflects a remarkably consistent story-line, characterized by a succession of political elites bent on transforming society. In pursuit of this objective they employ diverse strategies, outstanding among which are their efforts to transform existing educational arrangements. It was found in the course of this study that, without exception, these efforts failed to achieve their objectives. While acknowledging the potential variance among dominant elites regarding the importance that they attached to education as a tool for social engineering, there nevertheless appears to be a remarkable degree of consensus in the political action of successive regimes, which signifies a strong belief in the transformative possibilities of education. It was, seemingly, assumed that

the nature of a society at a given point is indeed causally related to the nature of existing educational arrangements, and that, consequently, educational change is a necessary and infallible mechanism with which to engineer a new society. Thus, almost without any exception, politically dominant groups in the history of South Africa introduced major changes and innovations to whatever educational arrangements existed at the time. So consistent is this pattern that it is possible to identify and match different educational projects to correspond with the different major political projects.

This leitmotif is consistent. The first European settlers, the Dutch, introduced education for the slave children, ostensibly wanting to instil the moral and religious discipline that could make the running of the settlement less burdensome. Although they did not have the time to implement their stated ideal of an 'open society', the liberal Batavians who ruled the Cape Colony for a brief period between 1795 and 1803 wanted to introduce an ambitious new educational approach based on the European ideas of the Enlightenment. The early British regime, also influenced by the social and political events in Europe, wanted to use education in its attempt to incorporate all peoples of the newly occupied colonies under the umbrella of the Empire. The second half of British rule, again, is characterized by increasing socio-political pessimism and

the advent of Social Darwinistic thinking which conditioned a segregationist approach to education. More recently, the Apartheid blueprint of Verwoerd incorporated, as a cornerstone of 'grand apartheid', the crude ideology of Bantu Education. Reform apartheid of the 1970s and 1980s, again, is accompanied by the more economically and technically orientated educational thinking that emerged from the De Lange Commission, seemingly in an attempt to repair the economic damage that resulted from 'Verwoerdian apartheid'. Finally, the current government wasted no time in introducing educational reforms in the form of 'mixed education' as part of their transitional steps to a non-racial 'New South Africa'.

In all the above mentioned cases (albeit in varying degrees) there is, on the one hand, an exaggerated belief in the transformative potential of education, and on the other, quite paradoxically, a consistent lack of concern for educational issues. The concern is narrowly confined to the social, economic, cultural and political outcomes of educational processes. This is borne out by a recent example, the introduction of so-called Model C schools (semi-privatized) which stands out as a move not reflecting 'educational thinking', but rather strategic manoeuvring - in the words of the Minister of National Education, the government is "positioning [itself] for the future" (stated in a debate on SATV). By this was presumably meant that the

current government is at the moment engaged in the exercise of securing its interests in the context of a future where it anticipates that it would, at most, have a small share in an ANC-dominated government. It could be argued that current initiatives are part of attempts to transform 'racial apartheid' into a form of 'class apartheid' whereby white privilege would be retained, albeit in a society free of overt racism (Pretorius, 1989). The 'privatization' of schools has the effect that racial integration of formerly exclusively white schools becomes a *de jure* possibility, but remains limited because of the *de facto* financial exclusion of the majority of children from black families. The exercise is aimed at reorganizing the racial patterns of school attendance, and educational questions as such are simply not considered relevant.

Equally noteworthy is that the pattern of dominant groups using education for 'non-educational' purposes recurs across the boundaries of different sociological epochs. These epochs are the periods dominated by settlers, colonial powers, in the context of pre-industrial, industrial, pre-capitalist and capitalist society, under different apartheid regimes. Thus, while these factors are not expected to be irrelevant, it appears that the tendencies under scrutiny cannot be explained with sole reference to the dynamics of any of the above sociological categories. This study will be concerned with uncovering a pattern continuing across some

of the above sociological epochs.

1.2 Education and Opposition

The failed efforts of dominant groups to attain social and political objectives by educational means, is only part of the story. On occasions in the history of South Africa, minorities, marginal groups, subordinate and oppositional groups also attempted to do the same, although from a position of lesser social power.

Case studies of oppositional groups using education for social purposes are less easy to find - particularly as one goes further back in history, concentrating on the most likely oppositional group, namely black South Africans. Any study that covers the history of the social development of education in South Africa will reflect that black oppositional forces took a relatively long time to become truly effective agents of their own ideas and interests. For the moment it will suffice to point out that variables related to the capacity of groups as social agents, combined with variables related to structural and ideological conditions affect, to a significant degree, the nature and quality of oppositional efforts. Thus, although there have been good examples of oppositional projects throughout the history of South Africa, it is only relatively recently that forces opposed to the apartheid regime could effectively mount a campaign aimed at putting an alternative in place of

the educational arrangements imposed by the dominant group.

The various instances of black opposition since the 1950s to the dominant group's apartheid education serve as examples of alternative educational projects. The first, rather limited, reaction against the introduction of Bantu Education was the ANC's effort to initiate alternative education in the form of 'cultural clubs'. The exercise failed mainly because of limited resources and its not being sanctioned by the apartheid authorities.

During the sixties the schools served as the safe site for consciousness-raising, but it was also a time when political opposition was so well controlled by the state that no significant educational movement appeared.

Soweto 1976 could be described as the first really significant challenge posed by black South Africans to the educational arrangements imposed by the white government. In 1982/3 South Africa witnessed the beginning of a national boycott of the schools of the Department of Education and Training, and the use of a variety of strategies by students and community-based groupings, aimed at achieving an effective oppositional impact. The mass mobilization of resistance against the apartheid state reached its climax during the decade of the 1980s when the educational sphere became a major site from which the intended transformation

of the SA society was launched (Unterhalter and Wolpe, 1989). Slogans such as 'Liberation Before Education' and later 'Education for Liberation' - i.e. People's Education, marked the growing importance of education as a site of struggle against apartheid.

Questions about success and failure are difficult to answer with regard to the events of the 1980s in South Africa. On the whole it would not be wrong to say that neither the oppressor nor the forces of liberation were successful in terms of their stated objectives. There is a predictable diversity in arguments explaining the changing strategies of the major contenders for power, which opened the way for the current politics of negotiation, but it is widely accepted that, by the end of the 1980s, these forces had arrived at a stalemate. From a present perspective, this stalemate appears to be confirmed. Adam and Moodley (1993: 1), for instance, state that :

Reluctant reconciliation is taking shape in South Africa. The ambivalent alliance between the two major contenders for power, the National Party (NP) and the African National Congress (ANC), results from a balance of forces where neither side can defeat the other. It is their mutual weakness, rather than their equal strength, that makes both long-term adversaries embrace negotiations for power-sharing. Like a forced marriage, the working arrangement lacks love but nonetheless is consummated because any alternative course would lead to a worse fate for both sides.

The relevant point is the failure of both dominant and oppositional agency. Leaving aside moral aspects of their ideologies, one notes that both Afrikaner and African

Nationalists, as sub-national groupings, adopted instrumentalist means in pursuit of power on a national level. To the extent that their original objectives were concerned with victory for such self-centred entities, they can be described as having failed.

Equally, People's Education as an alternative born out of the experience of the oppressed in Apartheid society and Bantu Education, is apparently failing to the extent that it is unlikely to provide an alternative to Apartheid Education. At the least, it still has not come to realize the promise of the 1980s. A doubtful future seems to be indicated for People's Education, in the light of recent political developments and the fact that it is a National Education Co-ordination Committee (NECC) project rather than a project of the African National Congress, which, as a government-in-waiting, is now compelled to concern itself with education on a broad, national level.

It is noteworthy, firstly, that one probable ideological weakness of People's Education could be that it is too concerned with socio-political transformation and therefore lacks sufficient 'educational' content. Secondly, it is also biased, since it appears to be unsuccessful in moving beyond defining 'people' as the oppressed and is thus unlikely to acquire sufficient breadth to form the basis of a national education system.

The thread running through these oppositional projects is one of changing strategies to forge the maximal political leverage by pressures generated in the educational context. As in the case of education domination, education for opposition suffers from its own instrumentality, i.e. using it as a means to achieve self-interested objectives. Again, there has not been much success.

1.3 Failure of Domination and Opposition

Regarding the agency of both dominant and oppositional groups, this study is focused on their relationships, their actions and the reactions of others to these actions as reasons for failure.

While social differentiation along racial and class lines is not unique to South African society, the polarization of the powerful and powerless is strikingly more extreme here than in most other societies. That would, arguably, point to the greater capacity of the powerful to succeed in their efforts. Not surprisingly, history shows a pattern of sustained dominance of the European/white over African/black. Even though the racial structure of South African society has remained an enduring feature since the early European settlements, the relationships within that framework are actually much more complex than they appear on the surface.

South African society consists of a variety of groups competing and struggling for power and, crucially, none is ever fully in control. In other words, none of the multitude of efforts to gain control of any sphere of society ever succeeds to the extent that a particular group can proceed to transform society to correspond with its image of the society it sets out to engineer. This does not imply that the South African society is a 'plural society' in the sense that it consists of more or less equally powerful competing groups (Dahl 1969). That would be inappropriate, because the vertical differentiation between haves and have nots is much too pronounced over the horizontal differentiation between more or less equally powerful interest groups (which is typical of the plural society described by people like Dahl). Yet dominance, even in a society as structured as the South African one, is never guaranteed, not even in times when the power differentials between the dominant group and others are at their most pronounced, as in the 1960s and 1970s under the most uncompromising apartheid regime. This is not to underestimate the repressive / controlling capacity that the dominant group possesses in relation to the oppressed, or that the relative failure of opposition should at least be partially explained by the power advantage held by the dominant group. The quarrel here is with those who argue that social dominance and transformation succeed simply because they are pursued, and

that dominance and transformation are causally related in a neat pattern which confirms the capacity of the powerful to change society to suit its interests. Here, the assumption is typically that class or racial domination automatically leads to educational domination, which in turn confirms and entrenches class and racial domination (i.e. the reproduction thesis). It cannot be denied, of course, that the South African society is characterized, more than anything else, by racial domination and that the character of all social institutions reflects this in some way or another. This study supports this view while at the same time challenging the idea that, for instance, colonial authorities succeeded in incorporating the 'silenced colonized' into their Empires, or by implication that Apartheid Education succeeded in engineering the social and political impotence of black South Africans.

It could be argued that dominant agency succeeds only if it achieves the specific objectives set when embarking on the projects of domination or transformation through education.

Similarly the same principle should be applied when investigating efforts of opposition and resistance groups: opposition does not succeed simply because it is offered. For example, the resistance against Bantu Education in the 1950s did not succeed simply because it was offered, and neither were the events of Soweto 1976 or the schools

boycotts of the 1980s simply successful. The efforts of oppositional groups are also not guaranteed to be successful, much as contemporary social theory would have us believe otherwise.

Recent work by Neo-Marxist and other theorists on social change in South Africa tends to concentrate on the struggle of the dominant group to achieve hegemony against the struggle or resistance of the oppressed. It focuses on the defeats being suffered and concessions being made by the declining regime, (the failure of the state's strategy of containment) suggesting that this failure be seen as the effect of successful resistance strategies (for instance the disinvestment campaign, boycotts and mass action). Some of these studies tend to move so far beyond the qualified acceptance of the simple reproduction thesis that they end up assuming the inevitable success of opposition. For instance, by the late 1980s authors like Magubane (1989: 213) were announcing the arrival of a revolutionary phase in the wake of the success of opposition:

In South Africa today an unprecedented historic leap forwards has taken place in the consciousness of the popular masses. It has moved from permanent and frustrated outrage to commitment to struggle and win. The determination has penetrated so deeply that the likelihood of it being contained looks more and more remote. Harnessing the surging energy of the masses and turning it into an unstoppable revolutionary force is the task now faced by the ANC. Having made "apartheid unworkable and the country ungovernable," the ANC is now moving to the second phase of the struggle to turn apartheid's retreat into a rout, the rout into a collapse and the collapse into a surrender.

From our current vantage point it appears that Magubane may have read more into the chaos of the time than was justified. The point that pressure can condition concessions, reform and even capitulation, is confirmed, but one should, equally, note the ironic tendency in some studies to ignore the fact that oppositional groups also fail in their attempts to achieve their own original objectives. This is ironic because, if opposition did indeed succeed, it would not be oppositional any more - apartheid should have been eliminated years ago. Perhaps that is stating it too simplistically - the important point here is that the failure of the regime to completely contain opposition and the success of oppositional agency cannot be equated. Within the SA context the abolition of apartheid laws does not mean the end of racial exploitation (See Cohen, 1986). The 'bottom line' for the movement in resistance to apartheid is a democratic, non-racial society where resources will be equitably distributed and people will have reasonable and meaningful control over their own lives. (I would suggest that the Freedom Charter be seen as the definitive statement in this regard). A crucial point is that a specific alternative to the existing order needs to emerge from the actions of the resisting group. Resistance which does not become reconstructive at some point (when the balance has shifted its way) can hardly be defined as having succeeded.

The success or failure of both dominant groups and oppositional groups must be weighed in the light of the original objectives that they set, and not whether they remain dominant or a force to be reckoned with.

What is required is an analysis of success/failure of both dominant and oppositional groups, in particular in terms of their interaction over time, and the effect of that on the relative failure of both. In addition, the success or failure of both dominant and oppositional groups can only be measured against original statements of their own objectives by the leaders of such groups or movements. In this study the approach will be to explore the success/failure of agency in this fashion with an emphasis on the fate of dominant agency.

The principal finding arrived at after the initial reading of the historical material is that none of the above educational interventions could be seen as having succeeded in terms of their stated objectives. Instead, the dominant, ascendant and marginal groups were often more successful in spawning oppositional or counter forces than in succeeding with their educational agency. Examples of dominant groups creating opposition or counter action are numerous: the British stimulated Afrikaner Nationalism, Christian National Education and the Afrikaner Language Movement with their policy of 'anglicization'; missionary education played an

important role in the emergence of African Nationalism; Bantu Education conditioned the emergence of cultural clubs, Soweto 1976, the school boycotts of 1980s and People's Education. Thus, agents acted on their environment, changing it, but not transforming it in precisely the way they that they set out to do. In a number of cases the outcome of the educational projects was so unwanted that the original agents ended up working at least as hard as some of the 'supposed' victims of the project to undo their own work, suggesting that the efforts devoted to achieving success were overhauled by efforts to counter the original aims of agency. This means that not only did the environment change in unexpected and unwanted ways, but also the agents themselves changed. The clearest examples here are the recent efforts by the National Party government to get rid of apartheid structures which have now become a burden. Even more intriguing are the efforts of successive apartheid regimes to deal with the outcomes of interventions by their predecessors. The same pattern is to be found in the People's Education tradition, with the efforts to generate an alternative to State education being thwarted by the dynamics of the broader political conflict and the persistence of the boycott strategy on the ground. The result, by the early nineties, is an educational boycott which has taken its own momentum and now threatens to undo the political gain made by the people over the past few years. Thus, movements and organizations like the National

Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) associated with the boycott campaign during the 80s are even now in the 1990s struggling to implement their 'Back-to-School Campaign' with success - in a sense they have also turned into opponents of their own ideologies and projects.

In these examples, the transformation of agency acquires a rather peculiar and paradoxical meaning, but the process whereby groups change in character and capacity in the course of their interaction with others is a more common, albeit not adequately researched, phenomenon. A central aim of this study will be to explain the failure of agency in relation to the transformation of structure, ideology and agency itself. The source of transformation focused on will be the interaction between these, for which the word morphogenesis is used, to refer to change emerging from interaction among systemic components. More specifically, the process of failure will be explored with reference to the morphogenesis of structure and its dialectical companion, the morphogenesis of agency or the so-called double morphogenesis.

The same approach is applied in explaining the transformation of ideologies. In most cases the societal effects of educational change produced new problems and issues which required new and often ideologically 'impure' strategies, resulting in the gradual deviation from, and

sometimes radical abandonment of, the original ideology, as was the case with the gradual deviation from so-called Classical Apartheid to Reform Apartheid and then to the so-called New South Africa. None of the major educational ideologies remained intact once they became relatively effective. The opposite is probably also true: as long as a group did not have an opportunity of employing its ideology in practice, it remained relatively 'pure'; but once it started having an effect on the social environment, it produced and received 'feedback' which would at the least require some ideational manipulation or strategic adaptation. (Obviously this would be covered up by rhetoric in order to save face). With the advantage of looking back from 1993, and not suggesting that it represents any a universal tendency, it appears as if what has happened (in ideological terms) is that originally utopian agents have been transformed into pragmatists, and original totalitarian oppressors have turned into reformists, or more generally, radical transformists have turned into moderate incrementalists. I want to argue that, strictly speaking, changing from radical to moderate means failure of radical objectives and transformation of agency, rather than the achievement of intended social transformation. At the same time, change from oppression to reform means failure of domination and transformation of agency rather than the achievement of the objective of reproducing social power and privilege. In this argument failure is, then, located in the

discrepancy between original and transformed objectives.

2 Aims of the Study

2.1 The General Aim and Philosophical Assumptions

The general theme of this study is that of educational conflict: dominance, struggle and change. The specific theme of the failure of agency is intermingled and directly related to the general theme.

The general theme emerged, in this study, as a feature of the socio-historical development of South African education. The aim, in this regard, was to survey literature on the social origins of South African education whereby a better understanding of the socio-political origins of the contemporary situation could be achieved. The intention was not to uncover new material but to reinterpret a familiar corpus of knowledge by applying a new theory.

From the general theme emerged two consistencies. The first was that successive educational arrangements retained the 'master-divide' / structural pattern / hierarchical divide between racial groups and that each successive era in the educational history somehow represents an elaboration on these relations.

The second consistency that emerged was that successive social agents have been unable (despite the apparent success of the Europeans/whites to remain socially dominant) to determine the outcome of educational processes in South Africa.

The specific aim of the study is to explain the latter phenomenon.

Philosophical assumptions and their theoretical and methodological implications: Instead of formulating a single statement to define the general thesis, a number of consistencies and general assumptions are presented, from which further arguments will be constructed. The following items have provided the main impetus for the theoretical and methodological approach taken in this study:

1) **The assumption of ontological complexity, i.e.,** that social reality is multi-levelled and multi-dimensional and that stability or change in major institutional spheres of a relatively complex society must be understood and analyzed with due regard to the complex interrelations between the various systemic and social components, i.e. structural and cultural patterns, as derived from past interaction between historical agents and social actions of contemporary people as agents of interests and ideas. Thus, the probabilities of change or successful agency are not to be reduced to a

single causal factor, but should rather be explained in terms of the inter-connections between a multiplicity of different contextual and agential factors. Variations in order, interaction and change must be explained with reference to variation in the nature of these critical junctures.

ii) **The assumption of temporal causality** - that events of a specific time can, at least partially, be related to events of an earlier time. Also, that it is theoretically possible to identify causal links through combining historical and sociological analysis. And that the constraining influence of the past can be fruitfully utilized to explain the success or failure of social action. This does not imply an oversimplified mechanistic or positivistic argument, but accepts the inevitability of events in time being connected with one another and in particular, people's ability to make these connections. It does not suggest that this relationship is easily explicable and able to be reduced to mono-variable explanations, but it certainly points out that no action occurs in an historical vacuum or outside a context.

iii) **The assumption of human reflexivity and interpretive ability** - that links between the past and the present occur through the medium of people's interpretations of situations and their resulting actions. These can be either in

contradiction to, or in congruence with, that which they have inherited from the past. The point is that the effects of past interaction on future agency do not occur independently of actual people who intentionally or unintentionally select alternative courses of action.

iv) **The assumption of indeterminacy of social action** - that outcomes are always unpredictable because social reality is indeterminate, yet, in relation to their interests, certain options are more attractive and others less so to social actors and agents, but this does not guarantee knowability and predictability of social action, since the beneficiality of a course of action still has to be perceived or interpreted by agents as such. Ultimately human social behaviour is more indeterminate than sociological theory traditionally will have us believe.

v) **The methodological implications of the above are the endorsement of analytical differentiation**, by which is meant the analytical teasing out of features of social reality which are widely assumed to be ontologically inseparable. For instance by unlatching structure (the outcome of past interaction) from agency (contemporary social action) and culture (or ideology) from structure (the relationships between parts of the social system) instead of following the popular trend of proclaiming the analytical inseparability of these, it is argued that the methodological objective of

exploring the interplay (which is incidentally also assumed by theorists who claim to have moved 'beyond dualism') between them, can be pursued.

vi) By accepting analytical differentiation and the accompanying methodological relationalism, the ontological autonomy of 'components' of social reality is rejected and the emphasis is placed on linkage. Thus it is argued that structure, culture, groups and individuals all have relative autonomy in affecting the nature and dynamic of societal phenomena. Therefore, separate analysis of sociological variables is conducted with the aim of exploring the interrelatedness and reciprocal relations between, for instance, structure and agency. This means that direction, variance, stringency, differential impact and causal relations in and between sociological variables can be uncovered.

Ultimately, these assumptions are still couched in the primary assumption of ontological complexity that rejects simple causality and determinism and, instead, suggests that analytically uncovered patterns and trends point to variables that condition outcomes along with potentially many unknown variables. Since societies are 'open systems' there are always more factors and forces to account for and, thus, social processes cannot be accurately predicted. Equally, structural or cultural processes and outcomes are

not inevitable or necessary but rather more or less likely and more often unforeseen and even unwanted by their original protagonists.

Not only do parts and people reflect a simultaneous interrelatedness and autonomy, but so do the different points in time. Thus, while the past, the present and the future stand in some patterned relationship to one another, they should also be analyzed in their own right.

Following from the previous point, the study will have a particularly pronounced **historical** flavour, an aspect which will be considered in the introduction to Section B.

2.2 The specific thesis

Following within the framework of the above theoretical considerations, the specific thesis of this study is that the failure of social agents to, unilaterally, determine the outcome of educational projects must be seen as the unintended outcome of the complex interaction between structural and cultural forces and the actions of those promoting those projects, instead of the exclusive result of either structural conditions, cultural conditions or the quality of agency. The emphasis in this study will be on non-educational groups or agents and their educational projects, and the objective is to explain how failure to transform society via the educational sphere is a

consequence (although not exclusive) of human agents' inability to escape from the complexity of their relationships with the structural and cultural outcome of past interaction and their relations with other contemporary agents who have an impact on social and educational processes. Owing to the complex impact of the conditioning of the past and the unforeseen outcome of interaction with contemporaries, social agents are rarely, if ever, satisfied with the outcome of their actions or projects in the educational sphere. Thus the failure of educational projects does not result exclusively from the tyrannical grip of the past or inadequate blueprints, but rather from the unforeseen consequences of interaction in time and among groups of people competing and struggling to improve their benefits from educational arrangements. This effects changes in the structural features or environment in which agents interact and, at the same time, agents themselves are transformed in terms of capacity, relations to others, ideas and interest. Used in this sense of the word, failure is only failure in a limited sense because success or failure is evaluated in relation to 'original objectives' and, since agents inevitably change over time, they adapt their objectives to deviate from those originally stated. That is obvious and not original, but what this study explores through the use of the concept of the morphogenesis of agency are the actual mechanisms through which agents become transformed through the process of interacting with others,

and the introduction of the morphogenesis of agency as an explanation for the failure of agency. This requires an exploration of the agent in a dynamic relationship with the social context.

Thus, this study is approached with the expectation of confirming that non-educational agents in the Cape Colony, when pursuing social transformation via educational projects, failed to achieve their objectives for reasons which are related to, among other things, the nature of the social and ideational heritage from the past.

People cannot just change or reproduce society as they wish. Humans have both freedom and some limits on how they act. This much is acknowledged by almost every social scientist and is not news to amateur and lay students of human relations. One needs to go further, though, and explore the diverse circumstances, diverse structural, ideational and agential features that make for differential outcomes in terms of the success of agency. It is in the exploration of these complexities that this study could make a contribution to the political-sociology of education.

3. Periodization and Demarcation

There are some theoretical and other implications of the

periodization of this study that must be considered.

For the best part of the four years over which the study was conducted, the period being covered stretched from the pre-colonial conditioning of the first formal educational projects to the developments of the late 1980s. In exploring the failure of agency in education, it was possible to identify a number of case-studies of which any one could have been a study on its own. However, it was obvious that attempting to cover the whole of this period would mean a loss of depth or else a study of immense volume. Wanting to avoid this, one had to find criteria for setting the parameters of this study. Keeping in mind the original objective of analysing the social development of education in South Africa to gain better understanding of the current situation, two options were considered: one, placing the emphasis on the more recent (that is the apartheid-era) or, secondly, placing the emphasis on the earlier period (the colonial era).

A good reason for taking the first option would have been that it could have served to enhanced one's strategic capacity in current developments. However the decision to opt for the emphasis on the earlier of the two periods was motivated in terms of the general theoretical and methodological approach being followed. The general argument that there are complex, yet causal, links between events in

the past and the present requires a greater understanding of the past. Too many studies cover only the recent past, thereby taking for granted some of the features of the past and its relationship to the present and future. A study like this, which takes a new look at past developments, but with the present dynamics kept in mind, could be academically useful in the sense that a new approach is being applied in a context and on material which has been 'left behind'.

Besides being a fruitful application of a theory in the above sense of the word, this study also produced some unexpected bonuses as an extension of an existing theoretical framework in order to make it more applicable to local conditions. In addition, it gave fresh insight into the contemporary debates by way of potential comparisons between the historical and contemporary situations.

The theoretical approach being followed in this study is that of British sociologist Margaret Archer who, in her major work *The Social Origins of Educational Systems* (1979), explores the process whereby State Education Systems emerge out of the interaction between competing interest groups within a context where education is owned and controlled by a monopolist, usually the church. The State System is the outcome of these dynamics and takes on the form of either a centralized or decentralized system, depending on the strategies employed by disadvantaged groups in the prior

struggle to wrest controlling power from the dominant group. The objective is to lay open the conditions from which State Systems emerge. In the second half of the work the focus is on the way in which the two forms of State systems condition further interaction. In order to make maximal analytical use of this approach in the South African context, one would have to determine the date when a State Education System came about in South Africa. This would then make possible a duplication of Archer's monumental study. That, of course, assumes that one is intent on applying Archer's approach to the extent of tracing the emergence and effect of state systems. Clearly, that was never the primary objective of this study. The main objective of this study is to explore the success or failure of agents in their efforts to change society via educational interventions. The dynamics whereby state systems come about and their effects on subsequent interaction can be explored as possible explanations for success or failure, but this is not the primary focus. As an unexpected feature of the study, it was found that the efforts to establish a National Department of Education in the Cape Colony in the 1830s were, indeed, closely entangled with the success and failure of agency. This finding was a bonus. However, a problem faced the author of this study in applying the ideas of Archer in the South African context and even more so in the colonial context. Overcoming these also produced some unexpected bonuses have been acquired.

Firstly, Archer's approach is a systems approach whereby actual social systems - systems in the sense of relatively autonomous and relatively persistent action systems - are being analysed. As applied to the field of the sociology of education, she places the emphasis on education as an institutional sphere in relation to other institutional spheres via the interaction between collectivities differentially related to the 'educational status quo'. The attempt is to explain the emergence of a national education system as an outcome of prior interaction between these different collectivities. With its strong emphasis on what emerges from interaction, the morphogenetic approach lends itself to the study of educational developments in countries like the typical European nation-states where institutional arrangements emerged over time and not from external intervention or imposition, as in the case of colonial societies. In Archer's own words when describing the scope of her major work:

This study attempts to delineate the conditions necessary for the emergence of state educational systems. But it seeks to account for the autonomous emergence of this macroscopic change as the result of group interaction in countries where it cannot be attributed to external intervention, via conquest, colonization or territorial redistribution (1984: 14).

On the basis of this qualification, an analysis of educational developments in the Cape Colony is not possible except if one makes specific provision through fundamental theoretical adaptations. The bold argument could be that, in the instance of colonial societies, one cannot talk of

autonomous social systems and that therefore the processes that would 'normally' be at work in a social system and institutional spheres could be absent. While there is certainly a significant difference between metropolitan and colonial societies in this regard, the above argument still constitutes a narrow definition of social or institutional processes and systems and also over-emphasizes the unique features of the colonial milieus. Instead, as it will be pointed out later, the European nation state and the colonial society are probably different from one another only in degree in so far as the processes which are typical of the colonial milieus.

SECTION A: THEORIZING ABOUT THE FAILURE OF AGENCY**1 Introduction**

This study is divided into two major sections, **Section A**, which is devoted to the development of theoretical equipment to explore the failure of agency and **Section B**, which is an application of the resulting theoretical approach to the history of educational developments in the Cape Colony. This could appear to be an old-fashioned separation of theory from application. To the extent that it is, it reflects the distinct focus accorded to both aspects, particularly in the early stages of study. However, the end-product of Section A was not written 'before' the historical survey and the mutual influence resulting from an unfolding dialogue between theory and substance will be clearly visible in both sections. It was, nevertheless, preferred to proceed with the separated approach in the writing up of this study in anticipation of refocusing on theoretical developments when analyzing more contemporary developments. The study is part of a larger project in which the focus eventually falls on the transition from apartheid to post-apartheid educational arrangements.

In Section A the author reports on the work done in order to develop the theoretical framework within which the failure of educational agency in the Cape Colony will be explored.

The objective is to selectively utilize the insights of British sociologist Margaret Archer (1979, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1989).

In the introductory section on *Theorizing about the Failure of Agency*, the aim will be to expose some of the general theoretical inadequacies in sociological theory for the purpose of exploring the issue under scrutiny and to prepare the ground for moving beyond these problems by building upon the general assumption stated in the General Introduction and taking them further on the course of exploring the reasons for the failure of agency.

Throughout Section A the focus will be on 'sociological theory'. The approach being followed will now be explained briefly. First, to recapitulate: the theoretical objectives of this study are firstly, to explore reasons for the success or failure of agency and secondly, to apply the morphogenetic perspective to educational developments and, at the same time, explain the success or failure of agency in colonial South Africa.

Before pursuing answers to the questions contained in the above objectives, I will first reflect critically on typical answers to these questions as contained in mainstream sociological theory. The rest of the Section will consist of the efforts, as shaped by the influence of others and

primarily the work of Margaret Archer, to develop a theoretical framework within which structure, ideology and agency are used as conceptual components in a more expanded morphogenetic explanation for the failure of agency. Where the thoughts of other theorists appear, their work will not be the central focus and, because this is certainly not intended as an introductory text in 'sociological theory', the extensive exploration of alternative theoretical answers to the central questions posed have been 'edited out' of the text.

Consequently the work of these theorists remains only through their influence in setting the theoretical and conceptual landscape in which one thinks about the success or failure of agency. When reference is made to the work of others, the focus is always on relevant thematic and theoretical substance, and not theory *per se*. Where the work of others is misrepresented, it will be unintentional and the result of brevity and the focus on a specific theme.

The answers being sought in this study will hopefully explain why (or to what extent) social (that is, non-educational and mainly political) agents fail to effect social change / transformation by means of intervention through the educational sphere.

Preliminary conceptual clarification

The concepts **agent**, **agency** and **failure** will be explained only briefly since they will be returned to further on in this Section (see 3.3.4 of this Section).

The word **agent** is used to refer to :

- i) **Primary Agents**, i.e. collectivities that are characterized by a common relationship among individuals in relation to a specific institutional sphere, its operations and outcomes - denoting something similar to Weber's (1921/1968) notion of "life chances". The nature of these relationships conditions similarity of orientation but does not determine anything.
- ii) **Corporate Agents** are organized interest groups, i.e. collectivities which act more or less intentionally in pursuit of their own interests, for which purpose they articulate their interests and organize to attain them.

Agency refers to the action of such collectivities:

- i) **Corporate Agency** refers to instrumental action of collectivities who act in self-interest and with intention (calculated, instrumental, goal-directed).
- ii) **Primary Agency** refers to being positioned, in systemic terms, in relation to certain institutional operations without acting self-consciously, organized, and strategically in pursuit of self-interest. The distinction between the two is important for this study

since the transformation of agents from (a) to (b) involves an enhanced capacity to have social impact and the transition itself will be utilized to explain the success or failure of both dominant and subordinate agents.

Of course the above definitions does not suggest equal interestedness and identification with a homogeneous set of goals by all members of groups, but rather a common relationship among individuals in relation to a specific institutional sphere, its operations and outcomes. The nature of these relationships conditions similarity of orientation but does not determine consciousness or action - ultimately a substantial number of individual actors have to give congruent meanings to a situation in a relatively consistent fashion and act accordingly on the basis thereof, if we are to speak of social agency in the Corporate sense.

For preliminary purposes, **failure refers to the failure of agents to achieve the objectives which they (collectively, through representative leadership or significant actors) have set for the group as a whole.**

As described above, the notion of social agency reveals a specific usage required for analyzing the specific social phenomena under scrutiny. In other words, the emphasis on

instrumental agency is not indicative of narrowness but of theoretical focus and conceptual clarity in correspondence with the empirical phenomenon under scrutiny. The agents are intentional in their action and we can ascertain that from the statements of intent made by prominent individuals or leaders and the ways in which members of a collectivity have acted in confirmation of their motivation to pursue specific goals. At the same time, the specific form of agency being referred to is defined with an acknowledgment of the need for a considerably more differentiated theory of social agency which contains recognition of the individual actor, the private (as against social) individual, unintended action etc.

An interesting and down-to-earth way of starting the discussion of the possible answers to the question is to consider what so-called 'lay people' have to offer as an explanation for the failure of agency. The notion of failure is a common theme in the contemporary public debate. The failure of the 'left', the failure of socialism, the failure of democracy, the failure of our schools and so forth are regular issues in the popular media, and it was not difficult to get responses to the question: "Why do you think that social groups wanting to mould society by means of educational change so often fail? Think, for instance, of apartheid education."

Not intent on doing a popular survey, I posed the question as explained above to a small sample of colleagues and friends. The following were some of the typical responses received:

"The problem must be that they were not experts in education and therefore did not know what they were doing."

"Sometimes people fail simply because the time is not right for what they want to do and not because what they want to do is so silly. For instance the social climate could be hostile to what would otherwise be a good plan."

"The ideas on which their alternative is based could be just inadequate."

"Most of the time people fail in the public arena simply because they do not have enough political clout."

"Blueprints for change need good organization to work. Mostly failure is the result of bad or inadequate organization and planning."

"We, as social scientists, are always out to find

complex excuses for failure. The most obvious answer, that of individual inadequacy, is too easily overlooked in finding explanations for social failures."

These statements are intriguing in a number of ways. They are not representative of any researched population, but they do confirm some prior held expectations in that they are both simplistic in a predictable way and thoughtful in a less predictable way. They are simplistic in the sense that they identify a single causal factor. Their responses all prompted a discussion in which I, without exception, posed questions in which the respondents were asked to consider other or more factors. In most cases it was conceded that reality is probably not always what it appears to be, and that it is more complex than such explanations as the above suggest. Yet, the more interesting aspect of this impromptu survey turned out to be the similarity between the initial simplistic statements by colleagues in the human sciences and 'lay people' and those which are offered by many sociologists after much research and theorizing. In fact, with a slight change of jargon, they would all have fitted into the explanations that follow later in this section and in other sections under the label of respectable sociological theories. The above statements contain 'kernels of truth' but also the typical over-emphasis on single variables like the characteristics of the agent, the quality of the ideas being employed and the structural or

power relations involved. They are similar in the sense that most sociological theories reflect the craving of their formulators to reduce social phenomena to single essential explanatory variables.

2. Failure of Agency in Sociological Theory

In this study I refer to the problem of **simplistic theorizing about social agency**, which does not refer to an absence of abstractness, argumentative sophistication or impressive theorizing etc. but more specifically to the assumption of **ontological simplicity** - i.e. that social reality contains readily identifiable and essential features that consistently determine other features. This leads to **reductionistic** theorizing and over-emphasis of certain phenomena and the accompanying under-emphasis of others in the explanation of social phenomena or, epiphenomenalism, as it is sometimes referred to. In this way the causal, and therefore explanatory influence, of more potentially relevant factors in relation to social phenomena is denied. The same problem can also be described as the assumption of **mono-causality**.

Hand-in-hand with ontological simplicity and determinacy go assumptions about the predictability of social processes and unidirectionality of social change. I would suggest here that popular opinion as expressed on social matters on a day-to-day basis most typically suffers from this ailment

and that, sadly, sociological theory rarely moves beyond this point. Despite most of them being valuable and impressive theoretical efforts, the above set of features are typically found in the work of the most revered of mainstream social scientists. In sociology, classical authors Marx, Durkheim, Spencer, etc. are examples, although, ironically, one finds a greater awareness of the challenges among them than among many contemporary theorists. All sociologists appear to be aware of the problem - most of the derogatory labels attached to theoretical traditions refer to the tendency under discussion. Many of the theoretical 'isms' in the social sciences are in a sense implied descriptive labels. Yet the malady persists!

2.1 Three Sociological Paradigms

For the purposes of this study the categories of structural determinism, cultural determinism and methodological individualism will be utilized for illustrative purposes. Because the criticism of simplicity is obviously too vague, a brief identification theoretical simplicity in the above theoretical perspectives by way of the typical answer to the question of why agents fail to achieve their set objectives may of help.

1) **Structural Determinism** (over)emphasizes the influence of the invariant underlying features of the system of social

organization in a particular society. Or to put it differently, structural determinists reduce explanations for the outcome of social interaction to the context within which action occurs and thereby relegate social agents to the status of epiphenomena. The problem is manifested in many forms, for example the success or failure of human action in achieving its objectives is described as being predetermined by the 'evolutionary needs' of the society (Spenciarian evolutionism); as resulting from the failure of the mechanisms of socialization in times of social upheaval (Durkheimian functionalism), or resulting from the absence of the necessary developments within the economic infrastructure (economistic Marxism). In all of these cases the social structure is credited or blamed for the success or failure of the endeavours of those occupying the social system, and in all cases there is some mechanism which operates on a level beyond the level of interacting individuals that directs the outcome of their social interaction. This results in a dehumanized and yet oversocialized view of social reality. This is clearly putting it in the most elementary form, but the features from which these answers to the failure of agency derive are universally accepted in criticism of these classical exponents of sociological theory. The value of these theories is in their groundwork in identifying patterns of variance in social structure over time. Their main weakness is the accompanying neglect of variance in agency. Most

typical structural determinist theories does not provide enough useful distinctions between types of agents whereby one could explore their differential interests and capacities to succeed or to make a difference in the existing conditions. The efforts of more contemporary exponents like the Structural Marxists Althusser (1969) and Poulantzas (1973) and others to move beyond determinism deserve more consideration. This happens later in the text, but suffice it to point out here that writers like Althusser and Poulantzas introduce notions of relative autonomy which are accepted in this study, but nevertheless persist in describing 'actors' (in their terminology) as inert and reduced to mere carriers of structural factors. Thus, they remain guilty of structural determinism with claims like that of Althusser that the economy remains the crucial variable "in the final instance."

ii) **Cultural Determinism.** Whereas structuralism (as used in this context) refers to the over-emphasis of structural features of the social system in affecting the success or failure of social agency, cultural determinism refers to the over-emphasis of the ideas, values and beliefs in explaining the same phenomena. Thus they go beyond the simple argument for the relative autonomy of the cultural. In some cases their arguments take on a pronounced anti-individualistic flavour and become a form of pure idealism. This is evident already in the earliest forms of this tradition, which has

its roots in German idealism, which reacted against the individualistic and rationalistic tendencies in British and French Enlightenment thinking. But cultural determinism also appears in many forms and through diverse spokespeople, from Sorokin (1957) to Parsons (1951) and from French semiologists to modern hermeneutics and cultural structuralists like Geertz (1973). What they have in common is not the recognition of the significance of ideas in human society, but the over-emphasis of its importance and the granting to the cultural a life of its own, while denying the causal and explanatory significance of material conditions, social actors, individual autonomy and the like. For the German idealists, tradition and the Geist had a life of its own (Hegel, 1807/1967); for grand theorist Sorokin (1957), successive idea systems had lives of their own; for Parsons (1951), value-systems had lives of their own; for Levi-Strauss (1967), myths could think for themselves and for Geertz (1973), cultural systems serve as a map which transformed mere locations into places. Besides the over-importance attached to meanings and the self-sustaining character that they acquire, these theorists also insist that ideas take a collective form. For the individual, culture then provides a socially 'pre-fabricated' universe of scripts to be played out by mere role-players. Despite their undoubted sophistication in many other ways, these theories are simplistic in the sense that they are reductionist and over-selective in terms of what is regarded

as of social significance and what not. Once again we have a dehumanized world and an underdeveloped theory of agency.

iii) **Methodological Individualism.** Finally, individualism, in the methodological as opposed to the politico-ideological or psychological sense of the word, is a form of reductionism that over-emphasizes the individual or individual consciousness. Some of the better examples, illustrating the absurdity of attempting to explain the features of one kind of phenomenon (society) with reference to another kind of phenomenon (individual or human consciousness), are to be found in the social sciences. Yet, such theories are ultimately un-sociological and self-defeating in the sense that they reject the typical sociological notion of *emergence*. In the words of Homans (1961: 14)

All the usual examples of emergent social phenomena can readily be shown to follow from psychological propositions.

Except via the continuities of interpersonal influences of one person on another over time, they deny the significance of history or the influence of the past on the present and future through persistent influence of patterns which derive from past interaction. Instead, the emphasis is on the contemporary individual as an ongoing, tireless and all-knowing creator of social reality which, in addition, requires a theoretically constructed notion of 'the human being' who is capable of this feat of ongoing social

construction. Homans's 'human being', for instance, is unproblematically rational, and ongoingly calculating; only concerned with the efficiency (profit to be derived or punishment to be avoided) of his/her actions. Blumer (1969) suggests the same. His theory gives full sovereignty to the actor, who appears to be in full control of social reality and always in complete presence of mind. The same primacy of the human consciousness is found in Berger and Luckman (1967: 107) when they maintain that ...

all symbolic universes and all legitimations are human products: their existence has its base in the lives of concrete individuals, and has no empirical status apart from those lives.

To stress the individual consciousness as the source of social reality in itself is not absurd, because it cannot be denied that society results from the way in which humans live together and that that again derives from decisions made by human beings. However, what does appear to be absurd is the notion of contemporary humans re-taking the decisions which give form to social reality at every moment in time - some of these decisions have been taken in the past and we have to either live with them or opt for alternatives (if one is, at all, aware of the decisions that have been taken and of the options available). In addition, to deny that human mental products acquire some form of life independent of the actual creators thereof is to deny the existence of ongoing social structures, cultural patterns, scientific discourse etc. But before running ahead of the theoretical arguments to be formulated later, let me

summarize: methodological individualism explains the success or failure of social agency with sole reference to the features of the agents themselves, their actions and interaction with others in the contemporary, thereby denying the relative importance of the context within which action occurs and the relatively autonomous influence of material, structural and cultural forces as derived from past interaction.

2.2 The Concept Agency and Recent Developments in Social Theory

In the following section of the text the concept agency, as used in the work of, particularly, resistance theorists like Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) and Anthony Giddens (1979, 1984), will be considered. The objective is not to present a comprehensive survey of the concept in the work of these theorists. Instead, their work is utilized selectively to clarify the contexts within which the morphogenetic notion of agency will be developed.

The concept **agency** has become popular in recent social scientific debates, arguably as part of an ongoing reaction against the over-socialized view of human society that pervaded sociological theory up to the 1960s. Despite post-modern attempts to 'decenter the subject' (Lyotard, 1984), these efforts persist and are particularly visible in the

work of neo-Marxists like Willis (1981), Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) Giddens (1984) and others who are active in working towards a new concept of agency that could take the Marxian tradition beyond the structure / agency dualism.

The objective here is to point out that these developments do make valuable contributions in taking the debate further than the simplicity referred to earlier, but it is doubtful whether they do enough in order, for instance, to be of assistance in understanding opposition and resistance as reasons for the failure of agency. The essential shortcomings remain self-imposed limits that prevent these theorists from gaining an understanding of the agency / structure relationship that could enhance the application-value of their ideas about agency.

From reproduction to resistance and counter-hegemony

The most obvious reason for the failure of dominant agency could be that it is defeated by oppositional agency or fails to overcome resistance emanating from agents affected by it. The notion of the success of the structurally dominant group is inherent in crude economistic and materialist Marxist arguments - as long as the capitalist relations of production persist, capitalist domination is certain. The decline of capitalism has nothing to do with human agency, but is a structural inevitability. The classical case of

this argument is that of Karl Kautsky, who described the decline of capitalism as

unavoidable in the sense that the inventors improve technic and the capitalists in their desire for profit revolutionize the whole economic life, as it is also inevitable that the workers aim for shorter hours of working and higher wages, that they organize themselves, that they fight the capitalist class and its state, as it is inevitable that they aim for the conquest of political power and the overthrow of capitalist rule. Socialism is inevitable because the class struggle and the victory of the proletariat is inevitable (cited in Ritzer, 1992: 276).

The implication is that the complexities of Marx's notion of the dialectic are short-circuited and, as the subject is made insignificant, opposition and resistance lose their significance. Besides the political inconsistency with Marx's own work which derives from the quietism facilitated by such an interpretation, the assumptions about the success of the dominant and the determined path to failure have the implication that these thinkers would tend to leave opposition and resistance relatively unexplored as areas of social investigation.

As a response to this form of deterministic thinking, many neo-Marxists have built on the work of Lukacs (1922/1968) and Gramsci (1971) in their efforts to come to a greater understanding of the subject and resistance against domination. Integrating ideas of Marx, Simmel and Weber, Lukacs, for instance, delineated the process of reification in order to put the human consciousness into 'objective'

focus:

Man in capitalist society confronts a reality "made" by himself (as a class) which appears to him to be a natural phenomenon alien to himself; he is wholly at the mercy of its "laws"; his activity is confined to the exploitation of the inexorable fulfillment of certain individual laws for his own (egoistic) interests. But even while "acting" he remains, in the nature of the case, the object and not the subject of events (1922/1968:135).

Still a rather limited view of human agency but, at least, Lukacs refused to see the proletariat as simply driven by external forces, but viewed it instead as an active creator of its own fate, since the proletariat has the capacity to develop true class consciousness, and as it does, the bourgeoisie is thrown on to the defensive.

Similarly, the work of Gramsci was pivotal in criticizing the "deterministic, fatalistic and mechanistic" (1971:336) tendencies in certain of the Marxist writings. Instead, he intended to celebrate "the resurrection of the political will against the economic determinism of those who reduced Marxism to the historical laws of Marx's best-known work" (Jay, 1984:155).

Specifically in the field of the Sociology of Education, efforts to counter deterministic thinking came during the 1980s in the form of critiques of the **reproduction theory** associated with Bowles and Gintis (1977). It is particularly with the introduction of **resistance theory**,

associated with Willis (1981), Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) etc., that the project to get the human agent 'back in' gained momentum. With this arrived the discovery of superstructural-cum-political struggles in the cultural and specifically educational terrain as articulated mainly in the work of Antonio Gramsci (1971). Yet, Gramsci's struggles for cultural hegemony were still waged by collectivities which were primarily defined by their position in the capitalist economic relations. It was still very much a macro approach, and it took people like Giroux and his various co-authors to give serious attention to breaking the micro-macro dualism in the sociology of education.

More recently, other studies have emerged that attempt to redefine the importance of human agency, mediation, power, and culture in understanding the complex relations between the educational sphere and the dominant class (See Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985, for a discussion of these). The approach is still in line with the traditional deliberate ideological choice for the oppositional-class position and in search of the evasive ideal of the political emancipation of the oppressed classes.

For these theorists, resistance theory represents a more sophisticated critique of the educational sphere by pointing

to social activities and practices whose meanings are ultimately political and cultural and not educational. They have attempted to analyze how determinant socio-economic structural features work through the mediating mechanisms of class and culture to shape the antagonistic actions of students in everyday life. By placing emphasis on everyday interaction, they claim to reject the functionalism and structuralism in both the conservative and radical versions of educational theory, and by analyzing educational practice as a complex discourse that not only serves the interests of domination but also contains aspects which provide emancipatory possibilities, they have presumably salvaged the liberation project of radical theory.

For the purpose of understanding the failure of agency, it is in these moments of emancipation that the potential failure of dominant agency should be uncovered. The question is whether the theoretical developments in the theory of resistance are adequate to grasp the nature of resistance and opposition. Tentatively, it could be argued that actions of 'opposition' and 'resistance' which cannot be translated into failure of dominant agency cannot be described as successful opposition or resistance.

Theories of resistance can be described as attempts to bring the human agent back into the Marxist debate on education.

By placing emphasis on oppositional agency, it is suggested that they do not assume the structurally determined success of the dominant class. Hence, it can be seen as a reaction against the theoretical neglect of opposition in both liberal and radical approaches. Where liberal approaches tended to label opposition as deviant, Marxist theories of economic and cultural reproduction tended to over-emphasize how structural determinants promote economic and cultural inequality. Any Marxist notion of opposition is inevitably too specific since it is always class-based; it excludes from the category of political action all sorts of action except revolutionary forms of oppositional action. In doing so, they under-emphasize how human agency accommodates, mediates and resists domination. Resistance theory, on the other hand, sees some important gains to be made for working-class liberation on the levels of the human agent and in the form of cultural production.

According to Giroux and McLaren (1988: 162) resistance refers

... to a type of autonomous "gap" between the ineluctable widespread forces of domination and the condition of being dominated. Moreover, resistance has been defined as a personal "space," in which the logic and force of domination is contested by the power of subjective agency to subvert the process of socialization. Seen in this way, resistance functions as a type of negation or affirmation placed before ruling discourses and practices.

It is important to note that the concept agency is used, by

these authors, to refer to a subjective state and not to collective action. As will be pointed out further on, it is questionable whether the atomistic actions of individuals could effectively be defined as oppositional to the extent that the failure of dominant agency could derive from them.

Part and parcel of the efforts during the 1980s to conceptualize the notion of resistance was the aim to break the artificial distinction between micro and macro or structure and agency. For this purpose the ideas of Anthony Giddens (1979) provided much of the conceptual basis for these developments.

Giddens's moves beyond subject or structure - from dualism to duality.

Consistent with recent moves in the social sciences, resistance theorists attempt to link structure and human agency in order to explore the way they interact in a dialectical manner. This represents a significant advance in educational and social theory, an advance for which some of the credit for the groundwork and subsequent refinement is given to Anthony Giddens and his particular approach to the structure-agency relationship. In particular, the focal role of human agency in the ongoing reconstitution of the structural features of society has become a central theme. Giddens (1979) argues, in essence, that people in their

interaction use the rules and resources that constitute the social structure in their day-to-day routines in contexts of co-presence, and in so doing, they reproduce these rules and resources of structure. Thus individual action, interaction, and social structure are all implicated in one another. They do not constitute separate realities, but a duality in the same reality, for "the structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute that system" (Giddens, 1979: 69).

Hereby Giddens intends to emphasize that the individual / society, subject/object, and micro/macro dichotomies do not constitute a 'dualism', but rather a 'duality' (Giddens, 1984).

While Giddens himself does not provide much empirical substantiation for his theory, he credits Paul Willis (1981) with providing a demonstration of interplay, tensions and conflicts that mediate relationships between the individual and his/her home, school, and workplace. The study by Willis provides a case study of resistance theory in action. It is used by both Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) and Giddens (1979, 1984) to illustrate the type of thinking which moves beyond the old micro-macro dualism. For Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) it illustrates the ideology of resistance at work, and for Giddens (1979, 1984) it illustrates the

duality of structure and agency. As an early example of 'resistance theory' it is worth taking brief note of this effort.

Willis (1981) shows in his study of the "lads" - a group of working class males who constitute the "counterculture" in an English secondary school - that much of their opposition to the labels, meanings, and values of the official and hidden curricula is informed by an ideology of resistance, the roots of which are in the shop-floor culture occupied by the family members and other members of their class. It involves a rejection of the primacy of mental over manual labour, rejecting its underlying ideology that respect and obedience will be exchanged for knowledge and success. They oppose this ideology because the 'counter-ideology' embodied in their families, workplaces, and street life, which make up their culture, points to a different and more convincing reality.

What is then being pointed out in this study by Willis (1981) is that the mechanisms of reproduction are never complete and are always faced with partially realized elements of opposition. Furthermore, it points to a dialectical model of domination, one that offers alternatives to many of the radical models of reproduction. Instead of seeing domination as simply the by-product of

external forces, working through subordination is viewed also as part of the process of self-formation within the working class itself.

The presence of Giddens (1979, 1984) is evident in the above and can be highlighted by exploring the way in which resistance theorists approach the question, "How does the logic that promotes varied forms of resistance become implicated in the logic of production?" For example, theories of resistance have attempted to demonstrate how students who actively reject school culture often display a 'deeper logic' and view of the world that conforms to, rather than challenges, existing capitalist social relations. Willis's lads rejected the primacy of mental labour and its ethos of individual appropriation, but in doing so they closed off any possibility of pursuing an emancipatory relationship between knowledge and dissent. By rejecting intellectual labour, the 'lads' discounted the power of critical thinking as a tool of social transformation.

The same action was displayed by students in Michelle Fine's (cited in Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985) study of drop-outs from alternative high schools in New York City's South Bronx. The most critical and politically astute students felt the least depressed and attained academic levels

equivalent to students who remained in school. Yet the irony is that they failed to realize the limits of their own resistance. By leaving school, these students placed themselves in a structural position that cut them off from political and social avenues conducive to the task of radical reconstruction.

There is a certain obvious utility of this approach for explaining the nature and outcome of the boycott of schools by black students during 1983-1986 in South Africa: when the students abandoned and started burning down the schools in pursuit of the 'Liberation Before Education' ideal, they were at the same time placing limitations on their own capacity to mobilize and organize the attack on the system, and in addition they were losing out on the, unacceptable as it was, state-provided education. The outcome of resistance has now turned against the agents, producing a generation of post-school-age people who have to catch up on lost education before they can enter the labour market.

So what is the actual significance of these insights for the purposes of the current study? For one thing, it appears that resistance theorists are still caught up in the limitations set by the class-ideology. While they acknowledge resistance, they do so only to describe the limited failures of the dominant group (similar to Gramsci)

but more effectively describe the ultimate failure of resistance. A most intriguing implication is that the oppressed become co-responsible for their own oppression!

The trend to grant creative capacity to the human agent and then to use it in order to describe how this capacity is turned on the human agent itself, is reflected in another important and distinctive feature of resistance theories and that is their emphasis on the importance of culture, and more specifically, cultural production. In the concept of cultural production one finds the basis for a theory of human agency that is constructed through the active, ongoing, collective medium of oppressed groups' experiences. Willis (in Barton and Walker, 1983: 114) elaborates on this issue, arguing that the notion of cultural production

... insists on the active, transformative natures of cultures and on the collective ability of social agents, not only to think like theorists, but to act like activists. Life experiences, individual and group projects, secret illicit and informal knowledge, private fears and fantasies, the threatening anarchic power arising from irreverent association ... are not merely interesting additions ... These things are central: determined but also determining. They must occupy, fully fledged in their own right, a vital theoretical and political transformative stage in our analysis. This is, in part, the project of showing the capacities of the working class to generate albeit ambiguous, complex, and often ironic, collective and cultural forms of knowledge not reducible back to bourgeois forms and the importance of this as one of the bases for political change.

Willis, as reflected in the previous quote, on the one hand admits to the ambiguous nature of working class agency, but

on the other hand he describes members of the working class as social theorists who have the ability to free themselves from their situation and theorize about their situation and the nature of society. This is also found in Giddens's notion of agency (see Archer's critique (1982)). Maybe one must point out that not even professional social scientists appear to possess the capacity to theorize in abundance. One does not have to deny the ability of the oppressed (and for that matter anyone) to think like a social scientist, but to attribute these characteristics to the working class as a collectivity is to deny the fact that they also act in ways that are contradictory and also make mistakes because of being shortsighted and overly self-centred.

Admittedly, the point that Giddens wants to make when he refers to the work of Willis (1981, 1983) in this regard, is that the thinking of the social scientist and lay actor are fundamentally the same and that both fail to make an 'objective intervention', but resistance theorists have tended to go beyond this insight by granting the working class perspective privileged ideational status. It is one thing to accept the position of the oppressed as occupying the 'moral high ground' but it is something different to ~~assume~~ the logical or ideational superiority of the working class culture. How do you then explain the fact that the lads (in Willis's study) and the astute students (in Fine's

study) make such basic strategic mistakes as they do by acting counter to their own interests? Are they not simply ignorant about the rules of political life? Even more telling about the dangers of this type of sociology is that it denies that 'dominant groups' are also made up of people who can also theorize. To argue that the oppressed base their 'theories' on everyday experiences (as referred to by Willis, 1982) opens up the enterprise to anyone, members of the dominant group included.

Notwithstanding the credit being given to the working class for its collective insight, there is little that one can detect in these writings which points to credit being given to oppositional agents for the failure of the dominant agent to keep on dominating. Equally, there are no signs of the dominant failing because of its own inadequacies or, for that matter, the subordinate classes failing because of their inadequacy. Somehow, one ends up with an incongruency - the dominant remains dominant despite the success of resistance, and resistance fails in the sense that oppression remains intact and yet, the oppressed are successful!

Nevertheless, the value and contribution of resistance theory lies in bringing the Marxist debate into the theoretical debate which it in the past ignored or dealt

with in a one-sided fashion. Clearly Giddens made some contribution to saving the tradition of critical social science from further loss of contact with empirical reality by providing a new answer to questions like why the capitalist social structure persists despite the impressive criticism mounted by theorists of the left.

Questions about whether resistance theory actually moves beyond the impasse of the late 1970s remain, and it could be argued that they still make pre-theoretical choices of which the theoretical implications cannot be evaded. There seems to be some confusion between ideological and moral choice, resulting in analytical selectivity and simplistic theorizing. We all know and acknowledge that we make value, ideological and moral choices. Nevertheless, while it is not possible to seal moral and theoretical issues off into separate categories, the social sciences remain guilty of going beyond this conclusion to the deliberate exclusion of 'data' which could, ironically, be useful for the political strategist. It could be argued that if critical social scientists want to be effective as 'idea workers' they must move beyond the point of deliberate exclusion of material. If not, the implication is that they will leave the political arena to the battle of brute force (See also Philip Wexler's remarks on the problems of ideological choice (1987:41)). It means that theories that reduce

social dynamics to the inevitability of a certain type of political change often do not provide adequate means of achieving such change since they exclude crucial information about social variety. For instance, the 'glorification of the working class's abilities' as if the working class form one integrated entity which has only one single objective, will not do (See Fine and Davis, 1991: 259-296). If that objective was so dominant why did the working class movement not succeed in producing the desired transformation? The problem appears to be that the criticism of the dominant ideology thesis has led to an over-correction - from an over-emphasis of structural and historical forces and a neglect of agency, resistance theorists have proceeded to an over-emphasis of resistance and an accompanying inadequate conceptualization of the historical development of the conditions that promote and reinforce contradictory modes of resistance, struggle and domination. The notion of agency utilized here is devoid of an historical context or things which happen 'behind the backs' of people. With specific reference to forms of opposition, what are absent are analyses of those historically and culturally mediated factors that produce a *range* of oppositional actions, some of which constitute resistance and some which do not. Clearly the problem is also that of conceptual under-differentiation of agency: while all action is potentially relevant, all are not 'appropriately oppositional', that is,

intended as resistance in the struggle against domination. Not all oppositional behaviour has 'radical significance,' nor is all oppositional behaviour a clear-cut response to domination. Sometimes subordinate groups embody and express a combination of reactionary and progressive actions - actions that embody ideologies both underlying the structure of social domination and containing the logic necessary to overcome it. Oppositional behaviour may not be simply a reaction to powerlessness, but may be an expression of power that is fuelled by and reproduces the culture of domination and even violence. Thus, on one level, resistance may be the simple appropriation and display of power, and may manifest itself through the interests and discourse of the worst aspects of the dominant culture. For example, students may violate school rules, but the sensibility that informs such behaviour may be rooted in forms of ideological hegemony such as authoritarianism, racism and sexism. Moreover, the source of such hegemony often originates outside the school. Under such circumstances, schools become social sites where oppositional behaviour is simply played out, emerging less as a critique of the nature and content of education than as an expression of what occurs outside the school. In some ways, resistance theorists have gone too far in viewing schools as autonomous. As the South African experience points out, under certain circumstances schools are used as repressive institutions in blatant

fashion involving the application of coercive agencies, including the police and the courts, to enforce involuntary school attendance (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985).

The value of subject-focused ethnographic studies will be so much less if the focus is placed primarily on overt acts of rebellious student behaviour. Important sources of change are indirect and often unintended. By failing in the system, by not living up to the expectations set by the dominant group, to 'drop out' early, to avoid the technical and vocationally orientated courses or to fail in attempting to pass them, simply not to play the game according to the rules that the leadership of the dominant group wanted them to play, does not mean that students make political decisions. To minimize participation while displaying outward conformity with non-political reasons also occurs in the 'dominant society', for instance, even in Afrikaans schools, pupils often do participate in religious studies, cultural ceremonies, and rituals aimed at Afrikaner ethnic mobilization are often joked about behind a mere facade of seriousness. Pupils are compelled to attend these ceremonies but they do not engage and act in accordance with the spirit of the event, and thus the effect of it on them is not what is intended by those who regard the events as important mediums to achieve specific socio-cultural outcomes. Now, this type of 'resistance' may or may not be

political (unlikely to be in the typical Afrikaans school) but could have political effects. Equally, 'inadequately socialized' adults often do not accept the propaganda offered by politicians who are supposed to be 'their leaders', simply because they have not 'gone out shopping for political ideas'. These are the people who are always described as apathetic, who do not act politically and do not present 'resistance' but nevertheless contribute to change and eventual failure of agency. To conclude, an adequate theory of oppositional agency requires clear understanding of what resistance is and is not, and equally an adequate theory of the failure of agency must reflect an understanding that the failure of dominance does not have to derive from direct opposition or resistance (more about that later in the text).

Unpacking the concept resistance

Following Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) it is accepted that the concept resistance should be made more precise and that a rationale for using the concept needs to be considered more fully. Firstly, it cannot be used in the broad all-inclusive sense of the word to refer to any form of rebellious and non-conformist behaviour. Correctly, they suggest that it must be put into a perspective that acknowledges the notion of emancipation as a guiding interest. That is, the nature and meaning of an act of

resistance must be defined by the extent to which it contains possibilities to develop a commitment to, or action in pursuit of, emancipation from domination and submission. Analysis of acts of resistance must, at the least, reveal a critique of domination, self-reflection and a motivation to struggle in the interests of social and self-emancipation. To the degree that oppositional behaviour suppresses social contradictions while simultaneously merging with, rather challenging domination, it does not fall under the category of resistance, but under its opposite - accommodation and conformism. The concept of resistance should be utilized to represent an element of actual difference - not only a counter-argument but a viable alternative to the status quo. If not, it could sound oppositional, but may never have that effect.

This distinction is not always easy to make. Some acts of resistance reveal quite visibly their capacity for 'making a difference' while others are rather ambiguous. Still others may reveal nothing more than an affinity for the same culture of domination and destruction to which they are supposed to react. There are so many cases in the South African context where one becomes aware of the complexity of this matter. For instance, one should ask whether the burning down of schools in the 1980s could actually be seen as destructive in view of the context of the extreme

oppression and the 'theory' reflected in 'Liberation Before Education'. I propose that the interests underlying a specific form of behaviour may become clear once the nature of that behaviour is interpreted by the person who exhibits it. In other words, people's interpretations of their actions must be accepted as a primary avenue through which to uncover intentions, interests etc. Yet this does not imply that such interests will automatically be revealed by reflective individuals since, for one thing, people may not be able to explain their behaviour adequately owing to the effect of many distortions in their own perception. Therefore, interests underlying behaviour may be illuminated only against the backdrop of the structural positioning occupied by a particular agent relative to others. Such a referent may be found in the historical conditions that prompted the action.

The above line of thinking is often described as 'structuralist' and avoided since it, presumably, denies the autonomy of the reflective subject. The question is whether the denial of the relative autonomy of structural forces does not lead to an ahistorical over-enabled individual agent?

This leads me to a brief consideration of the way in which Giddens (1979, 1984) uses the concept agency. The challenge

of breaking through the enforced choice between action or context in sociological theory became the preoccupation of the 1980s. As noted earlier, the theorist generally credited with the greatest degree of success is Giddens with his structuration theory (1984). There is no need to enter into a discussion of Giddens's theory but only to concentrate on some of his ideas regarding the nature of agency and the problems presented by Giddens in terms of this study.

Following the thinking of Archer (1982,1985), the problems with Giddens's notion of agency start with his strategy for overcoming the structure agency dualism. He uses a particularly undifferentiated notion of agency in order to avoid separating the subjective from the social, thereby stressing that to be human is to be social and that society enters into each and every human action. The implication is that the human being and the social agent become synonymous with one another (Giddens,1979,1984).

In order to avoid separating structure/culture and agency, Giddens suggests that structure and culture are being drawn upon in the routine production of action, which in turn instantiates structural properties, thus recursively producing itself. With a theoretical strategy based on the core notion of structure as the medium and outcome of

practices, Giddens, in the words of Archer "clamps structure and agency together in a conceptual device" (1982:8). The implication is that it precludes both the examination of properties pertaining separately to the two and in consequence it prevents exploration of their interplay. This mutually constitutive conglomerate presents us with an omniscient agency (thoroughly 'knowledgeable' agents) and an omnipresent structure (necessarily drawn upon in each practical act, with every such enactment invoking the structural corpus in its entirety). Archer's criticism (1982,1985,1988) of this approach is well-known and, for current purposes, entails (i) a rejection of the notion of thorough 'knowledgeability', (ii) a questioning of the notion that social rules are so mutually implicative that every action summons up and serves to reproduce the entire corpus and, (iii) a statement that the whole notion of mutual constitution precludes any specification of the conditions under which the stringency of constraints confines agency to reproduce the *status quo*.

In contrast, the morphogenetic perspective, propagated by Archer (1982: 9), seeks to explore this relationship, to advance propositions about when, where and how agency transforms structure and *vice versa*. But, remaining with Giddens, there are some *specific problems with Giddens's ideas in terms of studying the failure of agency*. He is

interested in agency as having the power to make a difference in the course of events or state of affairs or to recreate states of affairs. This means a particularly broad definition of agency which includes the unintended and unconscious aspects of individual actions that make a difference or contribute to the restructuring of society. Thus, he 'credits' the individual for that which s/he did not intend, i.e. the ongoing and "skilled" restructuring of society and or the making of difference / transforming society as intended by the actor or not. There should be no objections to this as long as it is not suggested that everthing of social relevance that exists results from the contemporary individual's activity.

But there is another problem. One can understand that the sense in which Giddens uses agency is in the ontological sense of the word and the project is to describe the process of social structuring and restructuring. However, for the purposes of sociological analysis, and particularly this study, such a usage presents a number of problems because it leaves undifferentiated the directed subjectivity of the intentional agents from the 'being there' or 'going on' and its unintended outcome. For the purposes of this study I need to define success or failure and the only way in which I can do this is through the judgement of the intentional agent's eyes. Giddens cannot define success or failure

except perhaps in the structuralist sense of the word: placing emphasis on the social structure and asking whether it is being reproduced or not and these are labels which Giddens would want to avoid. To be more specific, Giddens could hardly address the issue of failure because his pre-occupation with structuration points to agency as the ongoing restructuring of the context that conditions its own failure. Just as structure and agency are not to be separated, so the ongoing structuration of context cannot be separated from its effects.

It must be said that Giddens's exercise is something different from what is being done in this study. The level is ontological and the question is: how does structure persist and what is the role of agency? Thus, he is concerned with human beings and the implications of their intentional and unintentional, rational and non-rational actions. Of course it is a legitimate project but it is nevertheless confusing and analytically frustrating because he joins together what could be separated to make more fruitful analysis possible. It would help if he made it clear that he does not distinguish between socially purposeful agents and human beings. Only when one can know what was intended by agents can one assess their success or failure. More confusing is that the skilled, capable and politically relevant individual described by Giddens does

not describe every human being but only the intentional agent. While all people could be politically relevant, there are features of the agent which are related to varying capacities to achieve success.

Besides the variance in agency, the different contexts and their implications are also not sufficiently appreciated. Giddens acknowledges context but he does nothing theoretically with the variation. The question is whether various social contexts enable and constrain agents differentially. Giddens comes across as too wary of being labelled a positivist to argue for some relatively consistent relationship between structure and agency, for to do that he would admit that social organization is constituted out of more than the changeable acts of individuals and that there is theoretical justification to acknowledge the relatively invariant features of social organization without being positivistic. The implication is that Giddens describes how social action is structured but he neglects the implications of historically inherited collective circumstances in the course and outcome of social conduct. He claims the primacy of either collectivities or individual action but he makes no mention of the constitution of social collectivities (Cohen, 1989:9-10).

3 The Morphogenetic Approach

3.1 Moving Beyond Theoretical Simplicity

As argued earlier, the inadequacy of structural determinism, cultural determinism and methodological individualism seems obvious because they involve simplistic theorizing in the sense that social outcomes are explained with reference to single variables whereby other potentially influential variables are disregarded or marginalized or simply denied. The alternative to the above would generally involve the adoption of ontological complexity as a theoretical departure point and analytical differentiation as a methodological strategy by which the relatively autonomous significance of social structure, culture and agency can be appreciated.

As obvious as it may appear, so challenging does the move beyond simplicity prove to be. Despite relative consensus about the shortcomings of 'traditional sociology' - even across different ideologically inspired traditions - recent efforts appear to struggle to move beyond the old dilemma. Even when specifically addressing the problem, theorists still make chauvinistic choices between macro or micro or refuse to differentiate and thereby sacrifice analytical leverage. Sadly, progressive social scientists also still end up making theoretical mistakes because of the narrow focus induced by deliberate normative commitments. Finally,

the tendency to reduce explanations to single explanatory variables remains. Certainly these are generalizations, but I think they are sufficiently true to explain why a subject like sociology remains on the outskirts of the public debate while it has so much to offer. Sociologists sometimes appear to be less concerned about their obvious failings than are any other species in the academic community.

I believe that the way out of this impasse is through less ambitious and dramatic work that takes one back to a rigorous analytical approach instead of entering into the 'post' and 'beyond' syndrome. Before adopting post-empiricist and post-structuralist methodologies and perspectives, one should, possibly, first make sure that one can meet the modest challenges posed by more 'orthodox' research and theorizing. This study is a report of a sociologist's experience of 'returning' from the esoterical post-modern debate to the more rigorous work of systematic analysis and realizing that the most rewarding path is an eclectic one which still pursues causal explanation but combines a sensitivity for the instability and complexity of the social with a methodology that seeks to penetrate into the features of social variables in search of sociological data.

The assumption of ontological complexity suggests in this case that the failure of agency be explored without assuming

that a single essential explanatory variable will be uncovered. Rather than assuming mono-causality, it will be accepted that causality is a complex process involving different, often unknown and unforeseen and random variables. In addition, the outcomes of social action are rarely the simple causal effect of something else external to the actor. Rather, social action is ultimately unpredictable and essentially open-ended, owing to the reflective capacity of the social actors. Social actions are doubly indeterminate since not only are they performed by potentially reflective actors but these actors also interact with others of equal capacity. From this follows that novelty is never ruled out and the direction of social change is never certain. A study like this should then be undertaken by means of a multifaceted strategy by which various relevant variables are introduced into an analytical scheme, based on the assumption that the more information about the greatest number of influencing factors one include in an analysis the greater the possibilities of accurate research.

At the same time this study will aim to confirm the utility of analytical differentiation as a tool towards what will be referred to as **methodological relationalism**. Whereas mono-causal analysis generally presumes ontological autonomy of single variables (if not explained otherwise), the approach in this study will be to assume the ontological

interdependence and simultaneous relative autonomy of different variables, thereby justifying analytical differentiation as the first step to uncover the differential features, degrees of freedom and stringency of constraints. In other words, the failure of agency should be explored by considering the relative autonomy of structural features, ideological features and the characteristics of the agents. The emphasis is ultimately on the interrelatedness of variables and the objective is not to locate the single cause of failure but to understand relationships - leading to the notion of methodological relationalism.

This all seems pretty obvious, but analytical differentiation, as a strategy, is not beyond criticism, and multi-causal analysis could all too easily be just another way of rationalizing the absence of analytical precision.

Regarding the first point - analytical differentiation as utilized in this study is to be understood as an analytical strategy or device and not to be confused with an ontological statement about the nature of social reality. In other words, it is not suggested that social reality actually consists of entities like culture and agency that can be seen to have a separate existence from one another. It will become clear when explaining the application of this strategy to the specific theme of this study, that it is a

device which is **useful** in the sense that it facilitates the analysis of the phenomenon under question by precisely playing on the entangled nature of social reality. The emphasis remains on relationships; analytical differentiation is not an end in itself but a means towards exploring otherwise unexplored social complexities.

As for the dangers of multi-causal theorizing in that it could mean adopting a 'fruit salad' approach instead of searching for criteria according to which explanatory factors could be prioritized, this study stands for just the opposite: the search here is for more analytical precision in response to the challenge of uncovering more variance in social categories whereby a more complex understanding of relationships can be achieved. The common tendency is to avoid the hard work of differentiating between more or less important factors in explaining social processes, or to introduce a multiplicity of variables, only to end up with still reducing the argument to single causes (for instance Parsonian functionalism). The selection of variables is, in the first place, a function of a thorough knowledge of the thematic content of the study and it is important to guard against distorting the object of study in order to remain faithful to a 'model'. Thus in this study the selection and relative weight or importance attached to explanatory variables will be considered throughout the study without compromising the effort to be theoretically

consistent in the application of a theoretical model or analytical scheme.

The theoretical tradition followed in this study is the one led by the generation of theorists who, during the 1980s, engaged in the search for a way to move beyond the micro-macro / structure agency / voluntarism determinism impasse (Alexander, 1988; Archer, 1979-1989; Bourdieu, 1977; Habermas, 1973, 1987; Collins, 1988 et al). The style of theorizing followed is eclectic but strongly influenced by the work of neo-systems theorist Margaret Archer (1979, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1989). It will become clear later that the morphogenetic perspective adopted by Archer holds particular promise for applying analytical differentiation without stepping into the pitfalls referred to. Her work is attractive for the purposes of this study because it differentiates between more or less important variables by teasing out the relationship between micro and macro dimensions. She also analyses the relationships between social structure, culture and social agency without prejudging the primacy of one and, thereby, the residual status of others. Finally, the morphogenetic perspective makes possible a nuanced and dynamic explanation for the success or failure of social agency in various social contexts.

3.2 The Morphogenetic Approach as an Alternative - Conceptual Origins

Conceptually, the morphogenetic approach has its origins in the work of neo-systems theorist Walter Buckley (1967). The outstanding feature of his work is that it focuses on multilevel analysis. His work focuses on varied relationships between many aspects of the social world; networks of information and communication; the notion of feed-back; types of systems: simple to complex, open and closed; entropy and negentropy; types of processes: morphostasis and morphogenesis (Buckley, 1967).

Despite the fact that the work of Buckley has its origins in the hard sciences, where the notion of the dialectic is foreign, it shows a striking similarity with dialectic theories in so far as it places the focus on relations, process, creativity, and tension. Many of these features are also present in the work of Archer.

Other influences reflected in her work are those of 'general functionalists' like Blau, Etzioni, Gouldner, Eisenstadt and Cúrelaru, humanistic Marxists like Lockwood, Touraine, Wellmer, Habermas, Anderson and interactionists like Goffman, Schlegel and Jefferson (See Archer, 1979, 1984).

In this study the general outlines of the 'morphogenetic' perspective as developed by Archer will be used as the

guiding model to solve the theoretical problems experienced with the use of other sociological theories. At its most general, the morphogenetic perspective is a neo-systems approach which places emphasis on the relationships between social and systemic components in order to explain stability and change. The immediate implication of this approach is the need for analytical differentiation. Through this approach the micro-macro and related issues are also resolved.

The Micro-Macro link and the introduction of analytical time

Although many other differentiations are made for analytical purposes, most of them are conceptual distinctions. The most important distinction is that made between the micro and the macro levels of social reality. In other words, social structure and culture on the one side and action or agency on the other are differentiated from one another.

The challenge here is to resist the temptation to reify the components of the macro as though they were *things* which existed independently of the actions of human beings, and equally to resist the temptation of portraying the micro as if unaffected by the macro features of society. Doyal and

Harris (1986:169) advise :

Every institution or social practice was once initiated; it is sustained by virtue of nothing more than the results of human actions, past and present; it is reproduced through no other means than by new

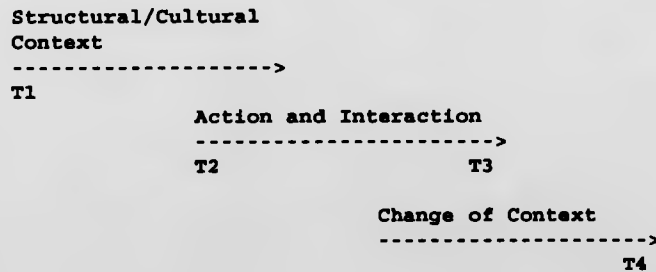
generations joining in those concerted actions; it is changed only in so far as those who belong to it or join it change what they do when they take part in it. On the other hand, none of this implies that the actions involved in initiating, sustaining, reproducing or changing an institution or social practice could have occurred outside an already existing institutional environment composed of rules and reinforcing a division of labour. This will be so even if no one is aware of the implications of their everyday activities. (See also Archer's reaction to Outhwaite (in Clark et al, 1990:88) on the accusation of reification)

The methodological consequence of this analytical separation of structure and agency is that ways must be found to investigate both sides of the societal coin - individual action, on the one hand, and its cumulative unintended consequences, on the other. Ideally there could be developed, on the basis of the basic differentiation, a nuanced model of differentiated macro conditions, forms of interaction and types of agency as they occur in these contexts, and outcomes of interaction which again set the conditions for future interaction. But how should this be done?

In the debate about how to break down the artificial separation between micro and macro in the social sciences, the morphogenetic perspective offers a solution: by separating them in order to explore their interaction. The means through which this relation is explored and the safeguard against ontological fragmentation is by the introduction of time. In other words, structure/culture is disentangled from action by locating structure/culture, as the patterned outcome of past interaction in temporal

sequence to precede agency. The implication is that the macro can be seen as the context within which contemporary people act, which contains the outcome of past interaction in the form of structural and cultural patterns. The micro, on the other hand, is the ongoing action of people in these conditions. For explanatory purposes the structural and cultural context which conditions people's actions but which is again reproduced, moulded and re-moulded through the actions of people, is seen as temporally prior to action in the following way:

FIGURE 1: THE BASIC MORPHOGENETIC CYCLE



3.3 Towards Thematic Workability - Application of the Morphogenetic Cycle

The morphogenetic perspective is based on the central tenet that neither the structuring of society nor the social interaction responsible for it can be discussed in isolation. This interplay between what is generally known

as 'structure and agency' is conceptualized by Archer (1988) with the aid of 'analytical dualism' (p.xiv-xviii), namely that the two elements have to be teased out precisely in order to examine their interplay over time (p.xvii-xxii). It is the importance attached to temporal sequencing which makes this both theoretically necessary and methodologically possible. The morphogenetic argument that structure and agency operate over time periods is based on two basic propositions: (1) that structure and culture logically predate the action(s) which transforms it, and, that (2) structural and cultural transformation logically post-dates those actions. This insight lies at the heart of the basic morphogenetic diagram presented above (Refer to Figure 1). All three lines are in fact continuous and the analytical element consists only in breaking up the flows into intervals determined by the problem at hand: given any problem and accompanying periodization, the projection of the three lines backwards and forwards would connect up with the anterior and posterior morphogenetic cycles. The application of the morphogenetic model and the principle of analytical dualism can be utilized in various contexts. According to Archer (1988: 288):

Analytical dualism can be used by any researcher to gain theoretical purchase on much smaller problems where the major difficulty of seeing the wood from the trees becomes much more tractable if they can be sorted out into the components of the temporal cycles of morphogenesis - however short the time-span involved may be.

The approach can be used from the investigation of large-

scale phenomena like the social development of educational systems (Archer, 1979) to the analysis of change and stability on the organizational level. It lends itself particularly well to explaining the relationships between the colonial/apartheid context, the way people were conditioned to act in these environments and the outcome of these actions.

Archer's work on the morphogenetic perspective can be seen as developing through phases in which separate emphasis is placed on structure, culture and agency while always placing the emphasis on interaction as the mechanism for social change and transformation. In her major work **The Social Origins of Education Systems** (1979) the focus falls on structural changes which result from interaction. The interplay between structure and agency is conceptualized as an endless three-phased cycle of Structural Conditioning ---
> Social Interaction -----> Structural Elaboration.

In **Culture and Agency** (1988) she applies the morphogenetic perspective to the cultural domain in order to unravel the dialectical interplay between culture and agency. In this case the morphogenetic cycle is conceptualized as consisting of sequential phases of Cultural Conditioning -----> Socio-Cultural Interaction -----> and Cultural Elaboration. Up to this point the focus was on systemic outcomes of interaction.

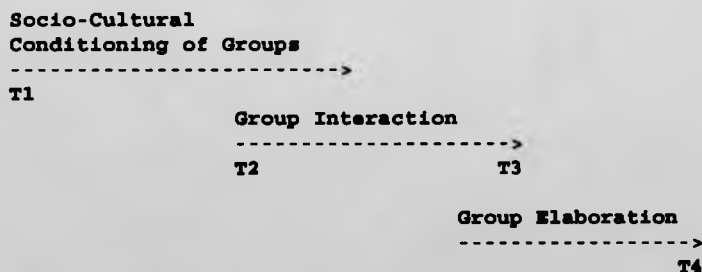
In order to complete the exploration of both sides of the structure/culture and agency equation, Archer proceeded to place the focus on the **transformation of agency** (Archer, 1989: 2). She argues that:

.... it is equally important to recognize that the self-same sequence by which agency brings about social transformation is simultaneously responsible for the systematic transformation of agency itself.

In other words a 'double morphogenesis' is involved (Sztompka, 1986): agency leads to structural and cultural elaboration, but is itself elaborated in the process.

Thus the focus shifts to an account of the Morphogenesis of Agency, utilizing exactly the same scheme on the same theoretical premises. To do this means approaching the diagram from the point of view of outcomes of agency rather than systemic outcomes. The Morphogenesis of Agency is then conceptualized as cycles consisting of Socio-Cultural Conditioning of groups -----> Group Interaction -----> and Group Elaboration (see Figure 2 below).

FIGURE 2 : MORPHOGENESIS OF AGENCY



Up to this point the discussion is very general, but it is only intended to clarify the utility of the morphogenetic

perspective for the specific purposes of this study. Why and how is this approach then helpful for the purposes of this specific study?

In the first place, Archer's work is valuable simply for the insights derived from uncovering the theoretical complexity contained in the concepts structure, culture and agency. She avoids the trap of theoretical simplicity and her work involves a persistent analytical strategy of teasing out theoretical categories which are otherwise accepted as homogeneous or undifferentiated. This is done with all three of the above concepts with the effect of enhancing their explanatory capacity and practical utility. For the purposes of this study, the morphogenetic approach holds the potential of uncovering the relative significance of these variables in the causation of failure. While the study adopts a style of research akin to causal analysis, it accepts the relative autonomy of variables and the complexity of the whole, which again counter-balances the search for causes of failure.

Secondly, a particular attraction of the morphogenetic perspective is the way in which it deals with temporal sequencing, which gives a logical order to the study and whereby (i) contextual circumstances pre-conditioning the original conceptualization of a 'project', (ii) the efforts to implement it, (iii) the reactions that it receives and

(iv) its outcome at a given historical point, can be evaluated for success or failure. The actual sequential format of a study like this is then facilitated by the theoretical approach. It allows one to gain an understanding of the forces at work in a given period of time which conditions people to act in certain ways towards others (interaction) - that is, the context (T1) within which interaction or agency is shaped through the grouping of different collectivities, standing in different objective relations (of privilege and underprivilege, as beneficiaries or penalized parties) *vis a vis* the structures and ideas which pre-date them. Having identified who is who in relation to one another, the next step for the analyst is to identify points in time at which collectivities made up of people occupying similar structural positions embark on projects in pursuit of their interests. At this stage they mobilize their resources, articulate intentions and define aims (this is at the beginning of T2 in the above diagram). This process of conceptualization and setting of objectives provides one, for the purposes of this study, with a 'yardstick' for evaluating the success or failure of the outcome of intentional agency (T3 and T4).

Thirdly, the morphogenetic perspective provides satisfying answers to the question of the failure of agency. The success or failure of agency is explored by placing the focus on structure, ideology and agency. In each case the

possibility of the autonomous impact of the features of each are considered. This type of single-variable explanation typically corresponds with traditional sociological explanations, but in each case this approach is found to be inadequate and the study proceeds to place more emphasis on interactive complexities to find a more adequate explanation for the failure of agency. A most valuable insight derives from the notion of the 'double morphogenesis' that explains the phenomenon of agents becoming transformed in the same process whereby structure/culture are being transformed because of their actions.

FIGURE 3: THE MORPHOGENETIC CYCLE AND THE CONDITIONING OF SUCCESS/FAILURE

Structural and Ideological
pre-conditioning: The
inherited context within
which interaction occurs

----->
T1

Interaction: The project under
scrutiny and the reactions of
others to it

----->
T2 T3

Outcome: Success/
failure or elaboration
in terms of
objectives set at
beginning of T2
-----> T4

Of crucial importance for this study is that contemporary people are always free from the past but they are never fully free of the consequences of the past. Thus, to

succeed or to fail does not depend only on what occurs in present time but also on what they inherit from the past.

Finally, the morphogenetic perspective makes provision for the notion of 'outcomes of action' (T3). In other words, it is possible to identify a point in time and to ask whether those who have set out to achieve a certain objective have actually achieved it, and whether they did or not, to what extent they succeeded or failed. Any theory that legislates against sequencing, that does not allow for 'outcomes' and calls for a seamless and ongoing social reality would not facilitate the answering of the central questions posed in this study (see Giddens, 1984).

3.4 Towards Conceptual Clarity in the Debate About Agency

It has been pointed out that the current debate about agency is underdeveloped to the extent that the concept agency is left undifferentiated leading to an analytical price being paid. Archer (1989) ventures into the terrain of differentiating between concepts like social actor, social agent, etc. and makes the particularly valuable contribution of providing clarifications which make possible the assessment of the differential capacity of agents to be successful in pursuit of their interests.

In the discussion that follows the text will remain close to the prose used by Archer in *The Morphogenesis of Agency*

(1989).

Social agents

Although there is much work still to be done in this regard, Archer has embarked on the exercise of disentangling the concept social agency from related concepts with the aim of exploring the relationship between them. Taking an extract from Archer (1989: 4-5) in order to give an indication of the nature of the exercise:

From the morphogenetic perspective 'social agents', of course, refers to people, but not everything about people and neither to things intrinsic to people. The morphogenetic perspective recognizes both human beings and social agents, but avoids using them interchangeably. There are many things about human beings (things biological, psychological and spiritual) which have, arguably, some degree of independence from society's moulding and may have little effect in so far as moulding society.

As a concept 'social agency' gives equal weight to its two terms (social and agency). In other words, it refers to **collective action** which is marked by structural and cultural conditioning, and to **social interaction** which in turn is responsible for socio-cultural stability and change.

The morphogenetic perspective concentrates primarily on **social agency**, a term which is always and only used in the plural. Usage in the singular refers to a social agent and therefore denotes a group or collectivity. By contrast, it is 'social actors' who properly exist in the singular (Archer, 1989).

Archer describes the morphogenetic approach as one that sees **social interaction** operating as the mechanism responsible for social stability and change. Therefore, she argues that agency is required to be reflective, purposive, promotive and innovative. Thus, structural and cultural factors influence agents only through shaping the situations in which they find themselves (Archer, 1979) and distributing vested interests in maintenance and transformation to different groups. These compel no-one and are better construed in terms of structure and culture supplying good reasons for various courses of action to those in given positions, than as simple causal relations. A good reason requires a reflective agent to evaluate it as such, to adopt it and to decide then what to do about it (Sztompka, 1989), all of which is beyond the wits of 'passive man'. Nevertheless, whilst agents need their wits about them to decide how to perpetuate rewarding situations and to eradicate frustrating ones, they should not be endowed with the comparative insight and historical hindsight of the good social scientist. For many situations can occur only within certain structural and cultural limits (Cohen, 1968: 205) and these unacknowledged conditions of situated action lie beyond the ken of time-and-space-bound agents (Archer, 1989).

3.5 Features of Agents and Their Success/Failure

Agents, from the morphogenetic perspective, are agents of

something. They are agents of the socio-cultural system into which they are born (groups or collectivities in the same positions or situations) and equally they are agents of the systemic features they transform (since groups and collectivities are modified in the process).

Taking this view means that everyone is inescapably an agent in some of their activities. Yet, the morphogenetic perspective makes a distinction between types of agents which is crucial for the purposes of this study. The terms '**Corporate Agents**' and '**Primary Agents**' are used for the purpose of differentiating between social groups in terms of their capacity to make an impact on the social environment and to improve their own position (similar to Weber's (1921/1968) notion of life chances). The differentiation between Corporate and Primary Agents also bear similarity to the distinction made by Dahrendorf (1959: 195) when he refers to Interest Groups and Quasi Groups. Finally, there are also obvious similarities between Corporate Agency and Weber's notion of goal-directed, instrumental purposive action.

Corporate Agents can be defined as articulate and organized interest groups (Archer, 1989: 12). Organized interest groups have the potential to make a particular impact in terms of systemic stability and change, since they are aware of what they want, can articulate it to themselves and

others, and have organized in order to get it. Therefore, they can engage in concerted action to reshape or retain structural or cultural features of a society. They include self-conscious vested interest groups, promotive interest groups, social movements and defensive associations.

Clearly, when talking about the capacity to succeed in achieving self-set objectives, Corporate Agents are enabled by the features just referred to. But all groups (contrary to Dahl (1961)) do not possess the capacity to command attention and be heard in decision-making arenas. As pointed out by Lukes (1974), many collectivities of those similarly positioned are deprived of having a say, in the sense that they are denied access to decision-making or their concerns are kept off the agenda. They can be denied any say at all when social organization serves to repress potential issues and thus the possibility of stating related demands. Such agents will not and cannot be strategically involved in the modelling and re-modelling of structure and culture, but they are still social agents. In morphogenetic terms they are referred to as **Primary Agents**. Primary Agents are distinguished from Corporate Agents at any given time by lacking a say in structural and cultural modelling. At that time they neither express interest nor organize their strategic pursuits, either in society or any given institutional sector. (A Primary Agent in one domain may be a Corporate Agent in another at any specific point in

time).

In this case then, it is clear that Primary Agents are less endowed to be successful. In fact, it does not make sense to talk about Primary Agents in intentional terms, since they do not exist as entities which define objectives for themselves.

Nevertheless, to lack a say in systemic organization and reorganization is not the same as to have no effect on it, but the effects are unarticulated in both senses of the word. Collectivities without a say, but similarly situated, still react and respond to their context as part and parcel of living within it. Similarities of response from those similarly placed can generate powerful, though unintended aggregate effects.

Thus, Corporate Agency shapes the context for all actors and Primary Agency inhabits this context, but in responding to it also reconstitutes the environment which Corporate Agency seeks to control. The former unleashes a stream of aggregate environmental pressures and problems which affect the attainment of the latter's promotive interests. Although Primary Agency is not in itself goal-directed, it could have a significant impact on the success/failure of Corporate Agents to achieve their set goals. Corporate Agency thus has two tasks, the pursuit of its self-declared

goals, as defined in a prior social context, and their continued pursuit in an environment modified by the responses of Primary Agency to the context which they confront. At the systemic level this may result in either morphostasis/stability or morphogenesis /change depending exclusively upon the outcome of interaction; but since social interaction is the sole mechanism governing stability or change, what goes on during it also determines the morphostasis or morphogenesis of Agency itself - in other words, whether agents remain the same in relation to one another or change. This is the double morphogenesis during which Agency, in this attempt to sustain or transform the social system, is inexorably drawn into sustaining or transforming the categories of Corporate and Primary Agents themselves. In the process of transformation, it is not only the social capacity of agents that changes, but they can also change in other ways. This study will seek to point out how agents change because of interaction and that this often involves the modification or abandonment of goals set in earlier social contexts.

The point that needs to be clear here is that success/failure of agency is intimately tied up in the ongoing transformation of agency through interaction. Agents change because of interaction and failure of dominant agency could often be the product of the emergent Corporate properties in Primary Agents which enable them to respond

more adequately to the actions of the dominant agent. Thus, it is the transformation from Primary to Corporate which often makes the difference between successful agency and failure.

Consistent with the commitment to explore relational explanations, Corporate and Primary Agency must be defined in relation to one another. The transformation of Primary Agency into Corporate Agency will be central in explaining the failure of agency as it focuses on changes in the differential capacity of different groups to succeed in their relations with one another. Power and social capacity are relational phenomena *par excellence*. By concentrating solely on the categories of dominant and subordinate agency is limited and sociologically impotent. One will never fully understand either if one does not understand the complex dynamics of the relations between them.

The transformation of agency and success/failure

To explain the above, a brief summary of the **morphogenesis of agency** is given. As explained earlier, the morphogenetic cycle contains three phases which contain separate propositions about, (i) the conditions under which agency operates, many of which are not of its own making. This refers to the fact that people are all born into a structural and cultural context, which, far from being of their own making, is the unintended result of past

interaction among their predecessors. Simultaneously, people acquire vested interests in maintenance or change according to the privileged or under-privileged positions that they occupy and whether the situations they confront are sources of rewarding or frustrating experiences. Next, (ii), these are conditional effects : to be socially efficacious they have to be taken up, articulated and acted upon. Conditioning is mediated through actors' situations which supply reasons for pursuing maintenance or change (retaining benefits or overcoming obstacles) which work on vested interests. These force nobody, but they constitute premiums for adopting reasons which advance vested interest, and equally objective penalties for endorsing ones which damage them. Conditioning thus operates through associating bonuses and penalties with different courses of action. They are not compelling, but their recognition by promotive interest groups is what produces regularities in the action patterns of collectivities, whilst the conscientious repudiation of vested interests generates deviations. Simultaneously, full allowance has to be made for group interaction which both manipulates knowledge and may lead to mis-representation of interests. An unrecognized vested interest prompts no protective/promotive action: penalties accrue but the price is paid uncomprehendingly.

Lastly, (iii), the resulting morphostasis or morphogenesis is the product of social agency. However, the outcome is

rarely exactly what any particular agent wants. Not only does it include overt compromises and concessions thrashed out during the middle phase, but also the unintended consequences of interaction. Such aggregate and emergent properties constitute features of structure and culture which condition the next cycle of interaction. At the same time, however, agency will have transformed itself as part and parcel of the process of working for social stability or change. The elaboration of agency contains its own quota of unintended consequences which are equally potent in conditioning subsequent interaction by delineating groups standing in different relations to one another and with differential chances of prevailing over others and influencing systemic outcomes.

In the following sections, the conditions facilitating the success of domination will first be discussed and then the conditions for change resulting from the relations between structure/culture and agency will be explored in order to develop a framework for the analysis of the failure of agency in the South African context.

4 Contextual Features Favouring Dominant Agency.

In order to understand the conditions that affect the success or failure of agency, it is not enough to consider the features of agents which affect their differential capacity to pursue their interests at any given point, and

despite the significance attached to the changing features of agents over time, it is also not enough to know how the capacity of agents change from their interaction with one another. The morphogenetic perspective demands an understanding of the relative significance of the features of the context, although it avoids the trap of strong relativism which defines the nature and capacity of agents solely with reference to contextual variables. Instead, the structural and cultural features of the context within which agents traffic will be accorded appropriate relative autonomy that can be justified within the framework of analytical differentiation and methodological relationism.

The following discussion will place emphasis on features and processes related to the social context that facilitate the success of Vested Interest Groups or Corporate Agency. First discussed will be the so-called morphostatic scenario which is an idealtypical description of the general social conditions that are characterized by processes facilitating social order and stability, as against the morphogenetic scenario that describes social conditions conducive to social change. The aim is to gather conceptual tools with which to explore the failure of dominant agency in the colonial society and to understand which features of the situation facilitate what type of action. For the sake of brevity a certain degree of generalization is unavoidable.

With the above overall contextual features in mind, the study will then proceed to investigate structural conditions, i.e. in the sense of institutional relations, again with the aim of exploring the variance in structural conditions in relation to their differential impact on agency. For this purpose the more restrictive monopolistic scenario will be explored as providing favourable circumstances for the dominant institutional agent.

Finally, the cultural domain will be explored in order to understand the relatively autonomous impact of the nature of ideas and ideologies on the success/failure of agency.

4.1 The Morphostatic Scenario and Social Conditions that Favour Dominant Agency

Throughout her work Archer uses the two concepts, morphostasis and morphogenesis, borrowed from Buckley (1967:58) to describe two contrasting forms of social situations and processes:

Morphostasis refers to those processes in complex systems environment exchanges that tend to preserve or maintain a system's given form, organization, or state. **Morphogenesis** will refer to those processes which tend to elaborate or change a system's given form, structure, or state (my emphasis)

The **Morphostatic Scenario** describes a situation characterized by the prevalence of conditions favouring the existing order and the ongoing dominance of the prevailing elites and dominant groups. Not only do these conditions

empower them in the direct political sense of the word, but also in terms of their capacity to pull off projects in other institutional arenas like education. At the same time other groups are constrained in the pursuit of their objectives.

The notion of a **Morphostatic Scenario** is of particular conceptual use for this study to describe the features of colonial society, and the idea of **morphostatic processes** is theoretically useful to describe the forces that work against the interests of indigenous and colonized peoples and in favour of the colonial regime.

Since the study also anticipates an application of this conceptual framework to the contemporary (that is the apartheid era) political sociology of education in South Africa, many of the examples and illustrations that will follow reflect that the work has been done on a wider canvas than is reported here. However, the substantial section (Section B) of this study reports only on the exploration of events in the colonial period. It needs to be pointed out that the conceptual labours for the complete application to the apartheid society have not been completed and it should not be assumed that what is being made applicable to the colonial society simply applies to the apartheid society. The reported material may require considerable adaptation for such an exercise.

The descriptions that follow will be in the form of extracts from Archer's work on the *Morphogenesis of Agency* (1989). Since there was no need to rewrite her explanation, the text in the following paragraphs will bear a strong resemblance to Archer's prose.

Features of the Morphostatic Scenario: This is an idealtype of a social situation characterized by the domination of what was earlier referred to as Corporate Agents or Vested Interest Groups (refer to p.92). This means that the relationships between the two types of agents, Corporate and Primary, are starkly delineated from one another. The distinction between them is maintained through interaction and proves relatively long-lasting.

This situation arises where there is a conjunction between structural morphostasis and cultural morphostasis. Ideologically and culturally speaking, this means that there is one set of hegemonic ideas and an accompanying culturally dominant group, which has not (yet) encountered ideational opposition and is able to reproduce ideas among the collectivity of Primary Agents, thus maintaining a high level of cultural unification in society.

In structural terms, morphostasis indicates a monolithic form of social organization with a superimposition of elites

and a heavy concentration of resources which together prevent crystallization of opposition - this subordination of Primary Agents thus allowing the structure to be perpetuated. The mechanisms by which this form of order is maintained relate, in the first place, to the reciprocal influence between the structural and cultural domains which reinforce the status quo and in the process perpetuate the preliminary divide between Corporate and Primary Agents by precluding re-grouping. Since the articulation of ideas (expressing interests) and the acquisition of organization (for their pursuit) are definitive properties of Corporate Agents, it is clear why this morphostatic conjunction represses their proliferation through its influences upon interaction itself.

The fund of cultural ideas which are available to Primary Agents engaged in structural interaction is extremely homogeneous. In Archer's (1989:16) own words:

There are no visible ideational alternatives with any social salience for those with audible social grievances to latch onto and thus articulate the source of their smouldering discontent. Instead, by reproducing a stable corpus of ideas over time, the cultural elite (the sole Corporate Agent in this domain) works to produce a unified population. These Primary Agents may indeed be the victims of perceptual power rather than voluntary adherents to consensual precepts, but in any case they are incapable of articulating dissident views and of passing these over the intersection to stimulate structural disruption.

In direct parallel, the social structure contains no developed marginal groups or powerful malcontents with organization to attract the culturally disenchanted.

Archer's description of subordination :

... there is no differentiated interest group available to challenge the cultural conspectus, by exploiting its contradictions or developing diversified interpretations. Thus from neither side of the intersection between the structural and cultural domains is the raw material forthcoming (i.e. organized interest groups and articulated ideational alternatives) for transforming Primary Agents into new forms of Corporate Agency. Primary Agents can neither articulate projects nor mobilize for their attainment. They cannot interact promotively but only react atomistically. Antipathetic reactions are restricted to the quiet cherishing of grievances or doubts, the lone rebeldy of sacrilege or insubordination, or personal withdrawal - geography and ecology permitting. The major systemic effect of Primary Agency is purely demographic. There are too many or too few (to feed or to fight), in the right or the wrong places, which can create problems for the (morphostatic) goals of Corporate Agents.

Yet, Archer concedes, in the long run, even this dumb numerical pressure of Primary Agents can be a big enough environmental problem to prompt Corporate policies intended to preserve stability to, ultimately induce change. I will turn to this matter further on.

It would be valid to ask, at this point, why the Corporate Agents, the structural and cultural elites of the day, who do not necessarily share the same interests and whose composition was determined in a prior social context, tend to remain solidary, consensual and reinforcing, often to the point of merger? One thinks here, for instance, of the missionaries and traders in the colonial situation and non-Afrikaner industrialists in Apartheid society. Archer (1989: 17) answers this question in the following way:

... elites too are constrained by the absence of ideational or organizational alternatives, but each is simultaneously enabled by what the other is doing. Thus, the structural elite is trapped in the only kind of cultural discourse which is currently in social parlance; similarly the cultural elite is enmeshed by the monolithic power structure which is the only form of social organization present. Given this conjunction the two elites have no immediate alternative but to live together, but what is much more important is that they have every interest in continuing to do so.

Thus, cultural morphostasis (through the stable reproduction of ideas amongst a unified population of Primary actors) generates an ideational environment which is highly conducive to structural maintenance. On the other hand, structural morphostasis (through control of marginality and the subordination of the mass of Primary actors) contributes greatly to cultural maintenance.

Now clearly, this is an extreme situation favouring powerful groups to an extravagant degree. But, while it will now be argued that the colonial society and to a lesser extent, the apartheid society can be described by using the morphostatic conceptual framework, it must be clear that this is possible only to a limited point. For the purposes of this study, the morphostatic scenario is an idealtype describing the conditions that facilitate the almost complete success of the dominant agent. This is a theoretical possibility, but in real terms rather unlikely. Nevertheless, the merits of describing the colonial society in morphostatic terms will now be described, since a prolonged debate about whether such a situation can empirically exist or not is not

warranted. It is more important to see the colonial society in the broad framework of the morphogenetic perspective.

At the outset it must be remembered that the objective of this study is not to explain the success of dominant agency but just the opposite. The argument for the systemic origins of change and failure is only enhanced by putting the argument in this form. The morphostatic scenario is the one in which failure of dominant agency is the less likely, but it occurs. Therefore the word *even* features so frequently in this study, i.e. dominant agents fail *even* in the morphostatic / colonial / apartheid society owing to irrepressible morphogenetic processes.

Without repeating too much of the earlier arguments about the colonial society in Morphogenetic Perspective, one could again confirm the rationale accepted here. Since the morphogenetic approach as applied by Archer was developed for the purpose of analyzing features of typical European societies, it could be argued that it does not simply lend itself to application to the South African and specifically the colonial context. This notion appears to be justified and facilitated by Archer when she states that there are fundamental differences between the typical European societies which she analyzed in her work and colonial societies. This demarcation derives from the systems-orientation of the approach which places its emphasis on

processes internal to action systems and the structural and cultural features that **emerge** from systemic processes. In other words it lends itself, for instance, to the study of educational developments in countries like the typical European nation-states where institutional arrangements are the result of internal interaction and not external intervention and imposition as in the case of colonial societies. To repeat Archer's words in referring to her own study:

This study attempts to delineate the conditions necessary for the emergence of state educational systems. But it seeks to account for the autonomous emergence of this macroscopic change as the result of group interaction in countries where it cannot be attributed to external intervention, via conquest, colonization or territorial redistribution (1984: 14).

Yet it will be argued here, and Archer will concede, that one is talking less about categorical differences and more about the differences in degree between these types of societies. I would propose that some of the features of modern society described by present-day social scientists could be viewed as reflections of the presence of morphostatic features in these societies. There are many examples, like Habermas's (1973,1981) descriptions of modern society as subject to recurrent systemic crisis because of the 'colonization of the life-world' by the currencies of the state and the economy. The society described by Habermas cannot be described in parallel with the morphostatic scenario, but the 'pathologies' that he refers to are essentially restrictions on 'communicative

interaction', which are similar to systemic conditions in the morphostatic scenario that favours dominant agency and excludes reciprocal, plural, negotiated interaction.

To refer to another example, postmodern Marxists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in their *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) appear to be concerned with the silences imposed on a wide range of dispossessed voices, such as those of women, blacks, ecologists, immigrants, consumers, and the like, and they call for a form of "radical and plural democracy" (Laclau, 1990:27). They propose to "create a new hegemony, which will be the outcome of the articulation of the greatest number of democratic struggles" (Mouffe, 1988:41). The significant point that emerges for the purposes of this study is that even in modern European society there are good enough reasons for people to adopt political positions that one would expect in a society devoid of the space for pluralistic socio-cultural discourse, and that the articulated problem appears to be the lack of cultural and political freedom to express these. Of course, it is a matter of degree.

Thus, it will be accepted by the current author that the colonial society is not categorically different from those investigated by Archer and, instead of accepting that the case being studied does not fit the conventional description of a social system as applied in the morphogenetic

perspective, the colonial society should rather be described as a good example of the morphostatic scenario - with the latter concept still being used in idealtypical terms.

Thus, contained in the foregoing discussion are the elements of a caution against an argument that could suggest that European societies could be portrayed as role models for a society like South Africa and that South Africa like all other 'non-European societies' should eventually become like European societies. This is not the point and it is, therefore, preferable to think rather in terms of a type of idealtypical morphostatic / morphogenetic continuum. Taking into consideration the earlier-mentioned morphostatic features, the above mentioned references to morphostatic features in modern European societies and, rather more interesting, recent descriptions by anthropologists about the types of societies that prevailed in pre-colonial Southern Africa, one would be inclined to put these 'pre-modern' societies further towards the morphogenetic end of the continuum than even modern Western societies. (see Section B for discussion on the Khoi and San societies and see for instance, Hamilton and Hirszowiz, 1987, on the nature of pygmy society of Central Africa and their emphasis on co-operation and reciprocity). Further towards the morphostatic end of the continuum one would find colonial, fascist, Stalinist, 'totalitarian', apartheid society etc.. These are, then, societies in which morphostatic processes

predominate and which are then, in Habermas's terms, characterized by a paucity of 'communicative interaction'. The contemporary European society will arguably fall somewhere in the middle of such a continuum.

The colonial society in morphostatic terms

Proceeding to consider the colonial society in morphostatic terms I will now draw a parallel between the Morphostatic Scenario and colonial society. The description will be in general terms and focused on the societal level.

First then, considering the relationship between agents in colonial society from a morphostatic perspective; accepting the variation between colonial orders, these societies are characterized by social relations that make a stark distinction between the free and the unfree (See Rex in Ross, 1982, and the discussion about the 'colonial paradigm' in Section B)

This imposes a relatively simple mould on all social relationships : mainly two social groupings positioned relative to one another in terms of an obvious contradiction or clash of interests. Accompanying the strains in external relations, both these groups are also relatively homogeneous in their internal character. Again, the homogeneity has much to do with the general pattern of the relationship between the two groups.

Because of the one-sidedness of the power-relations, the chances for indigenous social and institutional agents to act in pursuit of their own interests are particularly constrained. The disproportionately empowered external agent is further inclined to impose its will rather than allow interactive outcomes to emerge in institutional spheres, simply because colonial authorities are by definition arrogant and self-centred. Observe the words of Cecil John Rhodes, described as one of the most powerful agents of British colonialism:

I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better for the human race. I contend that every acre added to our territory means the birth of the English race who otherwise would not be brought into existence. If there be a God, I think that what he would like me to do is paint as much of the map of Africa British red as possible (Stead, cited in Magubane, 1989:167).

Such a society will be relatively static because of the predominance of morphostatic processes which tend to exclude or repress the colonized from social sites from which crucial changes could emanate. The implications of this are that social and institutional interaction tends to reflect the interests of the colonizer to a disproportionate degree. The colonizers assume institutional control as their given right. As will be seen in this study, the colonial authorities saw local institutional arrangements in the terrain of education as rather irrelevant and proceeded to implement European institutional inventions to attempt

social transformation that would further consolidate their interests.

As far as the cultural character of colonial societies is concerned, it can be expected that ideas that dominate the social scene will be the ideas of one group and that is the colonizer. Writers like Franz Fanon (1967) describe this situation as one in which the colonized is portrayed as simply lacking in culture, let alone holding views and values which could be sustained in the context of the colonizer. More than a mere matter of impressions being created, the colonial society, like the apartheid society, is characterized by the absence of the Other from the social arena.

A regular feature of colonial societies appears to be the predominance of the polity. Descriptions of colonial societies often contain reference to this feature and there are many obvious reasons why colonial societies could be expected to be marked by an excessive political character. Commenting on colonialism in Africa, David Hapgood (1965) and Mungazi (1989: 41) describe it as being the result of the 'mythology of imperialism' which entailed a system of values, beliefs, and political ideas adopted by colonial authorities regarding what they considered to be the inherent inability of Africans to understand the Western political process. A critical element of this mythology was

the conviction that the white man was superior to Africans in every way and that Europeans must rule in such a fashion that Africans could learn how to obey the government's orders.

The prominence of the polity is significant. For the purposes of this study the systemic concentration of social power is important because the location of power not only affects the relative autonomy and power of those associated with other spheres of society, but also, depending on the nature of the processes by which decisions are taken about institutional matters, the dynamics of one institutional sphere can water down the autonomy of others. (see Hamilton and Hirszowicz, 1987, Chapters 4, 9 and 10) on the fusion of the state and party, institutional hierarchy and the predominance of the polity). Thus, in the case of so-called closed societies, the state is monopolized by one political grouping which is, in addition, inclined to an authoritarian style of decision-making. The effect is that those who control the polity control the society, and institutional dynamics become less important relative to general political dynamics.

Of crucial importance is that the social relations that prevail in the polity tend to be reproduced in other spheres - groups in the educational terrain are differentiated on the basis of social power and the difference in power is

extreme.

As a result of the above feature, **interaction** in these conditions tends to reflect a high proportion of the application of first-dimensional or coercive power - even in other spheres of society like education. Not only do people lack the most basic political rights, they also lack the basic human right of freedom to speak their mind. (See Giroux (1992) on colonialism and silence). Consequently there is extremely little discourse in the form of reciprocal exchange. It is simply not tolerated. Habermas's (1973,1981) concept of communicative interaction or simply negotiation is useful to describe the type of interaction which is the opposite of what occurs in the colonial society. What we have is a situation with few or only inadequately functioning structures which serve as mechanisms whereby decisions about the distribution of goods and services / reward and punishment in the society are taken in such a way that those who make the decisions become influenced by the interest of those affected by those decisions. This means that the process by which decisions are taken is relatively devoid of 'communicative interaction'. The powerful does not negotiate its way into institutional spheres - it simply enters, sets the agenda, and imposes its will even against the will of others. The oppressed lack the means to give feedback through which they could introduce modification or exert pressure. The

powerful will not, as a matter of necessity, enter a specific sphere (examples in early SA when colonial authorities chose to leave management of education to others) but the point is that they have the political capacity to do so if they want to, and the collective mentality to disregard the cultural and structural features of the local social environment which might want to keep them out or at a distance (Mungazi, 1989:43).

The description given up to now will be complemented by a further discussion of the colonial scenario in Section B. The immediate objective here was to draw the parallel between the morphostatic scenario and the colonial society.

The conclusion arrived at by the end of this section is that the colonial society can indeed be described as a form of morphostasis but that it is marked by the particularly pronounced manifestations of overt power

This could have the effect of all spheres of society being characterized by the penetration of social power, leading to a relative lack of institutional autonomy. This study will proceed to explore the implications of this possibility.

Notwithstanding all that has now been said about the omnipotence of the dominant group in the morphostatic

context and the colonizer in the colonial society, the study is more interested in the qualification of this general description. In the situation just described, the social power of the dominant group enables it to impose its will in almost every way and place in society. That is true, but it is not the whole story. In the following discussion a further differentiation is introduced, namely the separation of social structure from institutional structure. This will be done while simultaneously outlining the institutional conditions that favour the dominant agent in the typical morphostatic scenario.

4.2 Structural / Institutional Relations that Favour Dominant Agency

As a signpost to what is to follow, it must be kept in mind throughout that the eventual objective of this study is not to confirm the endless persistence of morphostatic conditions and the success of dominant agents. On the contrary, it will be argued that dominant agency fails even in morphostatic and colonial environments. And the main reason for that may already be becoming clear: even in the colonial/morphostatic scenario the seeds of change are being planted all the time.

As the study moves on to explore structural features on the institutional level, the issue here will be that of

institutional control as differentiated from social control. Based on the evidence concerning colonial society, there can be little doubt that a group's social position is very important in explaining its capacity to enter and impose its will in a specific institutional terrain. In fact, while this is particularly true in the colonial context, it is also true of societies in general. The most obvious and common-sense conclusion to arrive at regarding educational relations throughout South African 'European' history, is that the political divide between white and black served as the master-mould which gave form to the overall character of education. European/white groups were successful in getting their way to the extent that educational control never reached the hands of black South Africans, and by all accounts they succeeded because they kept a tight control over the polity from which other spheres of society could be controlled.

Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that any institutionally external group, in any society, can effectively control institutional operations and their outcome over a prolonged period of time. There is not even any necessary correspondence between social power and institutional power. Neither is it always a matter of power. In the specific case of education, not all social groups have an equal interest in educational domination at a specific point in time. For instance, in the pre-industrial period many of the

local/indigenous groups simply had no interest in the type of education (or for that matter any formal education) imposed by the colonists. Even the socially dominant group is not always interested in controlling education or being the educationally dominant group. (For that reason settler colonial authorities often left education to the missionaries). Thus despite the regularity with which this occurred in South African history, it can be assumed that the mere acquisition of social power is not automatically followed by a group's intervention into the educational sphere. Variance is introduced by whether or not the group has an interest in retaining or changing the outcome of educational processes (for instance, the differences between non-permanent societies and permanent colonial societies). As can be expected, the correspondence of social power and educational interest would enable a goal-directed group, and the lack of social power in a educational interest group could restrict its capacity to achieve success in the educational sphere. Still, this, I would argue, applies more to the introduction of innovations than to longterm success with its implementation. In addition, it also follows logically from the previous observation that a 'marginal' group could also be successful if not challenged for control by the educationally disinterested but socially dominant group(s) (and here the missionaries appear to illustrate the point).

But the argument presented here could be even more subtle - even though social power and dominant interests may penetrate into the educational sphere, there is no certainty of success for the dominant group. Not even in morphostatic conditions. The reason is, in essence, that there are no conditions which exclude morphogenetic processes and as we will see later, the outcome of such processes is inevitably beyond the complete control of any social agent or actor regardless of their social power.

In order to proceed towards this argument some theoretical labour is required. The analytical provision for incorporating the features of the institutional level represents a complicating differentiation and is an uncommon move in the sociology of education and sociological theory in general. This is, for understandable reasons, even more so in the South African context. We typically find that mainstream macro sociological explorations are characterized by a set of reductionist assumptions about the relationship between different institutional spheres. These assumptions entail a theoretically simplifying over-emphasis of general social systemic features and a reduction of institutional dynamics to epiphenominal status, which means that the features of the institutional system as a relatively autonomous context within which interaction occurs, are ignored. Not only does the over-emphasis on the social system distract from the appreciation of the theoretical

relevance of the institutional system, but both social agency and interaction are simply ignored on both social and institutional levels. Correcting this analytical weakness requires a recognition of the potential significance of interaction within the institutional sphere, the structural relationship between institutions, and social agency as efforts to serve diverse interests and not only those of the dominant group. What is, then, rejected here is the assumption that it is sufficient to understand the social system in order to understand the outcome of educational processes - even in a so-called closed system / colonial / totalitarian or apartheid society. Such an acceptance usually derives from an ideological bias aimed at justifying arguments, like those of Bowles and Gintis (1977), who maintain that educational change is marginal and irrelevant in relation to the only real centre of change, and that is the economic base.

Archer (1982:64) makes a penetrating analysis of the issue with a discussion of what she refers to as the 'fallacy of structural permeation', the accompanying neglect of the educational system and the accompanying neglect of the articulation of the system with the society and the interrelation of its component parts derives from three shared and mutually supporting assumptions: the assumption of penetrability, the assumption of complementarity and the assumption of homogeneity.

I will summarize these three points:

i) The assumption of penetrability

As found in its most exemplary form in the functionalist theories of cultural transmission and Marxian reproduction theories, it is assumed that educational processes are nothing else than the expression of class relations or the mechanism for socialization into a common culture. The relations of power and other forms of differentiation which exist in other spheres of society are seen as simply reproduced and reflected in educational knowledge and processes. It is assumed that the patterns of social organization simply and without significant alteration, compromise or adaptation, transfer from society to education and it suggests that societal politics and educational politics are one and the same thing. This all hinges on the implication that there is nothing else of significance that affects a group's capacity to intervene successfully in educational matters than its degree of social power. This study will refute such an argument by pointing to cases in which even powerful and highly motivated groups in the South African context failed to achieve their self-declared educational goals even though they had the power to introduce their policies, programs and projects.

ii) The assumption of complementarity

Complementarity is assumed to be the result of an alignment

between educational interaction and power balance in society. It is assumed that, even if the socially dominant does not personally dominate education, activities of those in education complement the interests of the socially powerful, even if they do not intend to do so. This is the typical Structural Marxist argument about the hidden structure of capitalist society. As an example, this argument is commonly and with great appeal applied to explain that the missionaries were ultimately nothing but agents of colonial imperialism. This type of argument suffers from the theoretical neglect of the mechanisms through which this is achieved and the variance in conditions under which various groups have greater or lesser control or say in educational matters. The implication is that forces and processes within the educational sphere are all seen to work towards the outcome desired by the socially dominant. The above assumption will be questioned in this study. But even more than questioning the ability of those who are ostensibly in institutional control to simply impose their will on others, it must also be questioned whether those who manifestly control (or own, if you want) the educational sphere, could ever acquire such comprehensive control that all operations could be safely directed towards the outcomes that complement their interests.

iii) The assumption of homogeneity

In this case it is assumed that given the prevalence of a

certain or even an outstanding feature within the educational sphere itself, or in the broader society, the nature of educational structures and processes will all be homogeneous. That would mean, for instance, during the 1980s in the boycott of schools by black pupils, all acts of refusal to attend school were kindred, if not identical, to acts of resistance; that all white schools were tools of apartheid; that all missionaries were motivated by the same cultural considerations; that all colonial governors were tyrants; that all Afrikaner Nationalists or African Nationalists were motivated by the same interests, agreed with one another and acted in a concerted fashion, etc.. This would suggest that social categories are and remain over time neatly confined and internally consistent entities. The implication of this assumption is that social relations and institutional arrangements in specific periods in time are left unaffected by the interactions that occur in that time. This results in a failure to recognize and analyze the outcomes of tensions and contradictions which lead to structural transformations. Analysis of outcomes will expose how features of categories both persist and change over time. For instance, it could be argued, contrary to the view of many Marxist theorists, that racial domination has featured in the South African social system ever since the first Europeans settled at the Cape, and has been a manifest feature of the educational arrangements throughout this time. At the same time it must be

acknowledged that race relations took on diverse forms, racial privilege was not equally high on the list of priorities of the dominant group and that race and other relations have in themselves contributed to changed relations over time.

I will now proceed with the argument by placing the focus on the relative autonomy of institutional arrangements. This is where the work of Archer (1979, 1984) is at its most valuable. The main outline will follow her ideas as presented in the *Social Origins of Education Systems* (1979), but adaptations will be made as required for the specific thematic content of this study.

Different institutional arrangements in education

Archer makes a general distinction between forms of ownership or control over the educational sphere and then asks questions about how these variations impact on the interaction within. This involves a type of Weberian revision of the Marxist notion of 'class relations' in so far as the positioning of social groups relative to education is defined in terms of the chances that they have to enhance their 'life-chances' on the basis of having more or less access to institutional resources or to the outcome of institutional operations. In idealtypical terms, two types of institutional arrangements are identified in so far as the ownership and control of education is located in

either a single external owner or a monopolist - **education as a private enterprise** - or otherwise with a plurality of competing interest groups who could each have a share in the 'education market' in the context of a **state system**. Variations of this sort have differential implications for any particular collectivity, their relationship with one another and their chances to successfully penetrate and pull off a successful intervention to enhance their educationally derived social benefits.

What comes under scrutiny is the way in which education as an institutional sphere and educational agents stand in relation to other social spheres and their agents. Logically, and for the purposes of theoretical completeness, one should, at least, consider a situation in which education as a social institution is **actually autonomous**. In other words, consider the possibility of educational actors being independent, in self-control of the operations of the educational practice and not being dictated to by any outside force. Despite frequent claims by educationists that they are motivated solely by educational considerations, and the state or other powerful groups who deny having any manipulative capacity in the educational arena, such a situation is generally a mere theoretical possibility. For the purposes of this study **the actual autonomy of educational agency from other spheres of society is particularly unlikely** and does not warrant further

discussion. Yet this does not mean that one should fall into the typical sociological trap of denying any possibility of institutional autonomy (See earlier arguments about three assumptions).

Much of the work done by Archer, particularly in her major work *Social Origins of Education Systems* (1979, and abridged version of 1984), is to elucidate the **relatively autonomous** contribution of the institutional structure in the process of educational change, thereby challenging the popular sociological 'reproduction thesis'. She differentiates between education as a 'private enterprise' and a state education system, and then proceeds to point out how the different structural relations that exist in both have the effect of conditioning different forms of interaction, and how different forms (centralised vs decentralised) of state systems have a differential impact on interaction, and mainly how the nature of interaction in the 'pre-state' system has the unintended consequence of setting the conditions for the emergence of state systems.

Before proceeding with a further discussion of this facet of Archer's work, one needs to pause for a moment to consider the extent to which it is useful for the specific theme of this study.

In general terms, the potential usefulness of the

morphogenetic approach and these structural distinctions must be obvious, since it emphasizes how different structural features condition different forms of interaction, thereby having a differential impact on the success or failure of diverse agents in interaction. In order to gain maximum utility out of the specific differentiation between 'education as a private enterprise' and a 'state education system' for the purposes of this study, one would have to make a judgement as to when (if at all) a state education system came about in South Africa. This, of course, is what would be required if it were such a specific application of the approach followed by Archer that is followed in this thesis. Alternatively though, less specific variations in the structural relations between the educational sphere and other social spheres could be explored, making use of the general insights provided by Archer. It ought to be clear that the objective of this study is not to explore the emergence of a 'state system' or the differential effects of state or 'pre-state' education arrangements in relation to the success or failure of interventions into the educational sphere. Instead, the objective is to explore different historical events of social intervention through education and then ask questions about the reasons for the success or failure of these efforts - among these could be the structural conditioning resulting from the differentiation between state and pre-state education.

Thus, while accepting the potentially profound implications of the change from education as monopolistically controlled by one institutional agent to education as controlled by the state, the effects of such a transfer of power does not rule out the effect of other variations in relations between the educational sphere and other institutional spheres. In addition, one would certainly have to consider the impact of many other possible causes for the failure of agency besides the conditioning effects of specific institutional arrangements and it would only be an unlikely theoretical bonus to find that the emergence of state education is somehow useful as a variable in explaining the failure of agency. The main value of Archer's work remains in the analytical method of distinguishing between, on the one side, structural and ideological conditions as conditioning variables, and the nature of agency, on the other hand, in the effort to explain the success or failure of agency.

This study is, then, not particularly concerned with determining the dynamics by which a state system emerged in South Africa. Moreover, it can be argued that not even today do we have an educational arrangement that can be referred to as an education system. Education in South Africa is still essentially a monopoly controlled by one ethno-political group, namely Afrikaner Nationalists.

However, as it turned out, the study uncovered an episode the explanation of which requires an understanding of the dynamics associated with the emergence of state education systems - even if it is only to explain how it differed from the conditions under which a system would otherwise come into being. Frustrated by the slow progress that they were making towards anglicizing the Dutch-speaking Boers, the British authorities attempted to impose a state system in 1838. As will be discussed later, the macro variables discussed earlier in this section conditioned a different path towards the introduction of a 'state education system' from that which is portrayed in Archer's work. Even more interesting is that, despite the different effects of these macro features, the morphogenetic dynamics still had the effect of producing the failure of the state education system as a project of the dominant group. Thus, although the coming into being of a state system features in the study, it is utilized to explain the failure of agency rather than as an illustration of structural morphogenesis as in the case of Archer's (1979) study.

For our immediate purposes, then, there is not much need for a detailed discussion about the features of the 'state system' and the emphasis will be on the so-called monopolistic scenario where education is under the control of one non-educational agent.

What is of interest for this study are the structural relations that accompany such a scenario, some of their implications for interaction and how they condition the success or failure of the different agents. In what follows, the five structural positions associated with the monopolistic scenario will be discussed with reference to the above. For the purposes of illustration, groups occupying these positions will be identified in the Cape colonial context as well as in the contemporary apartheid context.

Structural relations in a monopolistic institutional system

In explaining the **morphogenesis of structure**, Archer describes in her major work the transformation of the educational sphere from a private enterprise to a state system. This state system is described as an emergent outcome of the foregoing interaction.

By education as a private enterprise is meant that one particular group virtually monopolizes formal education with the implication that education is firmly linked to only a single part of the total social structure, namely that institution with which the dominant group is associated.

According to Archer (1984, 22):

The link consisted of the flow of physical, human and financial resources from the ownership sphere to education and the counter-flow of educational services, appropriate to the dominating sector.

Archer identifies the following structural positions in the context of monopolistic educational arrangement:

1) **The monopolistic agent**

Monopolistic control of education suggests a single **monopolistic agent** who owns and controls education. This means that the physical facilities and teaching personnel are being provided and the content is being determined by a single group, and the same group is the main beneficiary of the educational operations. For our current purposes we refer to a group that is primarily associated with another institutional sphere, i.e. the polity, economy, church etc. and which intervenes in the educational sphere to pursue educational outcomes that will further its non-educational interests (this separation is, again, not categorical but analytical). In other words, it is an external agent in the institutional sense of the word, and, it is not the state, although it can be a particular group that traffics mainly in the polity or even has control over it).

This important division between the state and the 'ruling group' needs to be qualified. The literature on the relationship between the state and parties that traffic in the polity of modern capitalist society, is characterized by efforts to locate the real source of power and direction of power-flow between the state and other social institutional

spheres (see Wolpe, 1988, for a discussion). In the colonial situation and, arguably, in the apartheid context, this relationship is relatively manifest and clear-cut since the 'state' has always been a creation of only one socio-cultural group - it could always be seen as being sectarian to the extent of being representative of only one socio-cultural grouping in society and could hardly be referred to as the state if by that is suggested an entity which has either emerged from political contestation, is based on traditional authority or has some form of legitimacy which makes it a body in potential service of the society as a whole. As in most authoritarian societies, even when a group controls the polity and refers to itself as the 'state' it is not safe to assume that its actions would be that of a state (even with the varied manifestations of the state considered), but there is a crucial distinction which is regularly pointed to in the case of societies like the old Soviet Union, in which the party and the state are fused into one entity (see Hamilton and Hirszowicz, 1987). That is to say that even when the group which controls the state also controls the educational sphere, it is not safe to assume that the 'system' that it imposes on the rest of society will approximate that of a 'state system' if by 'state system' is suggested an entity that services the national population as a whole (see further aspects of the argument in Conclusions and Contemporary Relevance). This has an important implication : South African education has

up to the present, and until there is a transformation in the polity from monopolistic control to pluralism (even if highly centralized), always been under the control of an institutionally external monopolist and we have not witnessed a 'state system' as yet, even though the existing arrangement is referred to as a system. That which is referred to as the 'state' is more appropriately described as a pre-state arrangement controlled by an oppressive monopolist.

The situation of domination holds an obvious advantage for the monopolist, enabling it to determine the nature of education in such a way that it complements or serves its own interests. This also conditions the dominant group to act defensively towards others whose operations could be contradicted by the nature / definition of instruction. Yet, in the case of the colonial and apartheid contexts, the monopolistic action involved can hardly be described as defensive and rather as oppressive, since oppositional agency is not tolerated. Consequently it is more appropriate to talk about an oppressive monopolist to describe both the structural position and the nature of its actions. An oppressive monopolist does not so much enter into competitive conflict as impose its own will by crushing those who present potential competitive alternatives. Even in a 'competitive' context, the monopolists will possess the greatest capacity to succeed in achieving their educational

objectives and could potentially (but not inevitably) be aided in their pursuit of broad socio-political objectives through their involvement in education, but in the apartheid or colonial context the success of the dominant group is almost guaranteed.

Yet, even with such a structural advantage, success is not guaranteed for the oppressive monopolist. As will be illuminated in this study, the dominant agent in 'closed systems' may find it relatively easy to **introduce** new institutional arrangements but often finds it particularly difficult to **sustain** the arrangement for a prolonged period of time. (For that, it may have to apply extreme measures). Eventually an oppressive monopolist is likely to become a victim of unforeseen and unintended consequences that derive from ongoing morphostatic processes which in the long run acquire a particular and unexpected potency.

There are a number of obvious reasons that one can identify as conditioning the nature and potency of opposition. In the main, relations between the dominant and the directly disadvantaged subordinates are based on a direct clash of interests. Opposition in these situations is usually less interested in competition and more intent on reversing the power relations because competition and/or negotiation could amount to an unacceptable compromise.

Institutional monopolists often appear to be unshakeable but have a particular weakness that derives from their reluctance to enter into reciprocal relations. Their access to information about the 'other' is limited and, as one can expect, they lose strategic flexibility. In particular, the overly self-centred monopolist lacks the ability to respond creatively to changing tactical manoeuvres of the opposition.

Depending on how big the power differentials are and how much oppressive power a monopolist is willing to apply (which is great in both cases in the colonial and apartheid set-up), it can stay in superficial control for a relatively long time and even appear to be successful, but it will battle to succeed in achieving specific institutional goals and ultimately becomes the target of assertive action by the groups worst affected by the monopoly.

ii) Internal agency

Under monopolistic conditions, as described here, the autonomy of the internal educational functionaries is inevitably limited. Their actions are defined by the dominant group and they usually remain within the set parameters of action owing to their dependence on the resources provided by the external monopolist. Thus, the internal functionaries are subordinates lacking significant capacity to take initiative in both internal operations and

external relations.

In the cases explored in this study, the teaching corps lacked agential autonomy and did not show a particular degree of initiative. In the apartheid society, those who found themselves in close alliance with the regime propounded an 'educational ideology' (Christian National Education) which is, in its essential components, identical to the political ideology of the regime (Afrikaner Nationalism). As can be expected, apartheid educationists propagated their educational view, claiming its universality and educational foundations in 'fundamental pedagogics' (see the Chapter by Penny Enslin in Kalaway, 1984) and deny any linkage to vested Afrikaner Nationalist political interests. Oppositional action in the form of organized education was, until recently, virtually non-existent in South Africa. The assertive capacity of those who disagree with the existing educational arrangements has throughout been severely limited by the political nature of education and the closed nature of the polity. State power has historically been the major tool for controlling institutional spheres, and as long as there exists monopolistic control exerted from a severely restricted polity, little structural autonomy will exist in other institutional spheres. Thus, the ideas articulated in the educational sphere are either rationalizations by intimidated educational functionaries (like black teachers and officials who ended up operating as

agents of Bantu Education), intellectualizations covering up commitments to non-educational interests (like Christian National Education), the ideologies of currently repressed/stifled socio-political agents who have not yet succeeded in having a direct bearing on the educational arrangements because of their lack of access to the polity (People's Education), or the private and/or academic exhortations of unorganized atomistic agents with educational interests at heart but no social/agential capacity to clear the ground for educationally defined innovation. As could be expected, the latter is the rarest of species!

Beyond these two intimately related categories, the rest of the society stands in various relations of subordination relative to the dominant group.

iii) Neutral structural positioning

There are, at least theoretically, also social groups who are relatively unaffected by the nature of education because their interests are vested in educationally 'neutral' institutional spheres. Despite its empirical rarity, there are people and even collectivities who are not directly affected by the outcome of educational processes and are thus not conditioned to seek for changes in education.

A debatable example of this category could be the merchants

in early stages of industrial development when the demand for skilled labour was low and the pool of unskilled labour apparently inexhaustible. The implication could be that their need for items to sell was not dependent on the skills acquired through formal education. But then, the relationship can be more subtle than direct benefit in terms of skills acquired. The traders of the Cape Colony benefited from educational arrangements since it changed the local economy from a barter to a monetary economy and introduced consumer habits that would be to the advantage of the trading class.

Groups such as isolated rural people and traditional communities are all to some extent in this category and the search for pure examples is not necessary. Theoretically, though, the point is that people and groups in such a position are less easy to manipulate by those who control education. For instance, the rural trekboers simply ignored the educational arrangements introduced and imposed by the colonial authorities in the town areas. Similarly, children from the slave and Khoi San communities during the early Dutch period simply walked away from school never to return, because the education presented was irrelevant to them as herders of cattle and traditional farmers. Such groups could be a factor in the primary sense of the word in that they contributed to the failure of existing arrangements because of their lack of interest in the educational service

provided, rather than its direct intervening inputs.

iv) The structurally advantaged

Then there are agents of 'advantaged' institutional spheres, whose operations are 'complemented' by the outcome of educational operations while not fully correspondent. It is in their interests to align with the monopolist to enhance its capacity, since they are also dependent on the dominant group for their own operations. Groups in this position find themselves in a potential exchange relationship with the dominant group and can enter into negotiation with the monopolist to achieve a limited measure of success as external agents making educational interventions to serve their own interests.

At times in South African history, the missionaries and the churches found themselves in this situation. Equally, capitalists and industrialists, motivated by interests similar to the dominant group (albeit in differing order of priority) like in socio-political order and economic growth, have good reason to enter into exchange relations with the educationally dominant group. In recent history, 'corporate capital' was prompted, in the aftermath of 1976, to establish the Urban Foundation (UF) thereby starting to play a role that complemented the Nationalists' political interests. It is often argued that the UF started investing in housing and education in order to secure socio-

politically and ultimately industrial stability. This 'interference' was tolerated by the Nationalists because it aided them in containing popular resistance (See the chapter by Nicola Swainson in Unterhalter *et al*, 1991).

In terms of institutional relations, the implication is that these groups are potential allies and partners of the dominant group and their actions could serve to cement dominance even if not intended to do so.

v) The structurally obstructed

Finally, there are the agents of 'obstructed' institutional spheres, whose operations are 'contradicted' or 'blocked' by the outcome of educational operations. Since they seek both social and educational change, it is in their interest to intervene, but the changed outcome pursued by these agents is in conflict with that of the dominant group and consequently the dominant group would be unwilling to enter into negotiation with them. This relationship thus conditions the 'obstructed' agent to enter into competitive conflict. Examples from South African history of groups who found themselves in this position are easy to identify. Whether they entered into 'competitive conflict' depended on their own capacity relative to the powerful monopolist. There were the traditional chiefs ever since the start of the European 'invasion'; Dutch speaking Boers at the time of

British anglicization; African Nationalists in the 1950s and again from the 1980s; the Black Consciousness movement in the 1970s; the People's Education movement in the 1980s and the capitalists in late apartheid. All of these suffered as a consequence of the existing educational arrangements, and many attempted efforts to counter, replace, compete with or boycott the dominant group's imposed education. But most failed because of the extremity of power differentials and the closed nature of the political centre.

To conclude, this section may require confirmation of the positions in which groups find themselves relative to one another providing them with the reasons to act in a certain fashion. That they will act in the way that the 'logic of the situation' points to is never certain.

4.3 Ideational Conditions that Favour Dominant Agency

The following section of the text will be guided by the question: What are the conditions pertaining to the ideas and ideologies which favour the success of dominant agents? The approach followed will not enter into the minefield of judging the quality of ideas and ideologies itself, but will shift the focus to the relationship among ideas and those who hold them. For this reason, the separation of the cultural domain, i.e. the terrain of ideas, and the social domain, i.e. the terrain of groups and individuals interacting, is required. Again, the distinction is

synthetic and will be justified in this section.

Earlier, the cultural domain of the morphostatic scenario was described as being characterized by a conjunction between structural and cultural morphostasis and a relatively homogeneous fund of ideas which is available to Primary Agents engaged in structural interaction. This could easily be taken as evidence of the absence of diverse definitions of the situation, even a lack of dissensus and no desire to articulate marginalized or repressed interests. The argument presented here is that where there appears to exist a high degree of ideational consensus in a situation characterized by significant structural inequality, one could expect to find efforts of dominant agents to hide contradictions from the public eye, or to politically manipulate the social groups in whose interest it may be to exploit ideational contradictions, so that they refrain from articulating oppositional ideas and ideologies.

This argument contains a number of important and interlinking implications. Clearly, it refers to instrumental action on two levels: one is on the level of ideas and one is on the level of other people. Besides the motivation for the methodological separation of the socio-cultural and ideational levels, the above statement also contains the implication that ideational patterns and processes could have a relatively autonomous influence on

the actions of people. The reverse, i.e. that people create ideas and that culture is a product of human action, is obvious and uncontroversial. The point being made here is that ideas, and in particular the relationship, at a given point in time, between ideas, ideologies, clusters of ideas and the like, have some influence on the actions of people.

In the section that follows, brief consideration will be given to the relatively autonomous influence of the nature of ideas on the success/failure of agency. The work of Archer in exploring the morphogenesis of culture in her work *Culture and Agency* (1988) will form the basis of the exploration. As in the case of investigating the role of agents and institutional features, the implementation of the work of Archer is selective in relation to the theme of the study. The intention here is to point out the relatively autonomous role of ideas and ideologies in affecting the success or failure of social agents and more specifically, the ideational conditions which facilitate the domination or ongoing domination and agential success of dominant agents in colonial society.

It must be clear that the approach adopted, while separating ideas and agency and even placing emphasis on the relative autonomy of ideas, never takes people out of the picture.

Thus, for the purposes of the theme of the study, one would

want to explore the ways in which a dominant group controls the traffic of ideas and ideologies. At least two general strategies should come under scrutiny: those that place the emphasis on power and those that place the emphasis on the manipulation of ideas. In a typical morphostatic scenario like the colonial society, the dominant group may be inclined to use power strategies to repress oppositional debate - their social power enables them to prevent the exposure of ideological incongruencies between themselves and subordinate groups from erupting into 'fatal' social conflict.

On the other hand, as can be seen in this study, dominant agents may want to transform society instead of maintaining the status quo, and may want to avoid excessive social conflict. Particularly where regimes are committed to other priorities, they may not want to spend much time, energy and resources on responding to the social conflicts that may erupt between themselves and oppressed or marginal groups. In such a situation they could adopt a strategy whereby ideas instead of people were manipulated.

This is an option that can be considered even in a colonial context where dominant groups are not inclined to opt for strategies other than the manifest-power-orientated ones. But, arguably, one would find such strategies more in a situation where there were too many risks involved in power

strategies, for instance during the late 1980s in South Africa when 'hearts and minds' strategies became more popular in view of the ongoing loss of legitimacy of the apartheid state, compounded by the use of direct force to repress opposition.

The interesting **theoretical issues** that this section of this study sets out to investigate are, **firstly, those regarding the ideational features which condition these actions by the dominant agent and, secondly, to gain insight into the strategic options open to dominant agents as they attempt to gain cultural hegemony. Thirdly, the section will set the tone for exploring the forces and processes that work against these manoeuvres.** The discussion of ideational failure of dominant agency will be considered later in the text.

The substantive focus is on ideas and ideologies held by people about society and education, but conceptually, I will use interchangeably the concepts cultural domain, ideational relations, ideological patterns and so on. This section of the study starts with the assumption, as stated by Archer, that Cultural Systems can be analyzed in formal terms in so far as there are logical relations between their components. I will now proceed to discuss the uses and abuses of the concept culture, explain what is meant by the notion of a Cultural System and also give consideration to the utility

of identifying formal relations between ideas, ideologies or clusters of ideas.

As approached in this study, an investigation of the relationship between ideas, ideologies and agency falls within the broader **debate about culture and agency** and it would be wrong to ignore it and some of its implications, since the rediscovery of culture in sociology and related disciplines poses challenges which have emphasized the necessity of inter-disciplinary exploration of the concept itself and its social effects (Alexander, 1988; Archer, 1988; Bourdieu, 1977; Foucault, 1972; Geertz, 1973; Giddens, 1979 and others). Without entering into the immense complexities, the above aspect of the current debate needs to be considered. For the purposes of this study I will remain within the framework of Archer's theoretical project, taking selectively from her pathbreaking work, **Culture and Agency** (1988).

The uses and abuses of the concept culture

In defining the concept culture, the broad social sciences are now well past the old-fashioned and elitist notion of culture as the sum of the 'best that has been thought and said, and regarded as the summits of an achieved civilization'. Substantially, culture, it is increasingly agreed, does not refer exclusively to so-called 'high-culture' but includes the 'ordinary' day-to-day activity and its outcome. As used in the context of 'cultural studies',

culture refers to a 'whole way of life' or the representation of lived experience.

This all-inclusive definition of culture has certain serious implications for the political debate in South Africa. The concept culture is often used by some Afrikaner leaders in the South African political debate. And it is ironic that what is regarded as an advanced notion of culture in the field of cultural studies could be misinterpreted to confirm the narrow Afrikaner / apartheid view of culture as a closed and internally homogeneous 'form of life'. As used in the South African context, it is a distinctly simple notion of culture being employed - one originally introduced by Afrikaner ideologues to justify apartheid and separate development. It is still being used to justify claims for so-called group rights, to explain the so-called 'black-on-black-violence' as being based in deep-rooted cultural and ethnic differences, and lies at the heart of rightwing politics with its persistent calls for a separate Volkstaat or Boerestaat. Thus, more serious than mere simplicity in an academic debate is the actual distortion of the meaning of the concept culture through the denial of the crucial difference between statements about culture in itself and statements about groups holding on to the components of a culture and the analytical effects of such a distinction. The confusion of group, people or volk with culture, and the efforts of the Afrikaner establishment to impose such a

notion on others through various means of socio-political segregation on the basis of 'cultural variety' is a hallmark of apartheid thinking. The most common 'mindset' is reflected in expressions such as

Soveel volke wat daar is, soveel kulture bestaan daar
[There are as many cultures as there are peoples]
(Coertze, cited in Boonzaaier and Sharp, 1988:17).

Thus, in the South African political discourse, the concept culture and definition of 'a culture' are a statement of identity, a moral and a political statement and not, as it should be, in the first place a statement about ideas, values, beliefs and theories. While I would not suggest that the association between specific groups or 'forms of life' and culture (as ideas, values, beliefs etc.) should be denied, I would in this study, following Archer (1988), argue for the separation of culture from groups for analytical reasons (to be explained below). It could be considered that the attraction of the 'form of life' thesis in European social science has something to do with the struggle of minorities to assert themselves in cultural milieux which are dominated by generally uncontested mainstream lifestyles. Of course, in South Africa it is different; the white Afrikaner minority attempts to use the notion of separate ethnic cultures in order to unite itself and to fragment the black majority into politically manageable entities. It is little more or less than the old divide-and-rule strategy that is being employed, and with some success, one might add.

Some of the implications and reactions to these manoeuvres are worth noting, albeit very briefly. Firstly there is the role of the divide-and-rule strategy in the ongoing political violence. Besides so-called third-force and other factors, the conflicts between black ethnic groups like the Xhosa and the Zulu should at least partially be seen as deriving from the tragic success of this tactic. The separation of workers into culturally homogeneous hostels has created a sense of difference and competition that only required socio-economic and political precipitators to trigger off political violence.

Secondly, and closely related, are some of the threats to negotiations that could be supposed to lead the country into a unitary state. Besides the white conservative reactions referred to earlier, and concessions already made in accepting the notion of a federal type of state in which regional communities would have relative autonomy from the national government, there are also the politics of resistance adopted by some leaders of the homelands, who threaten the negotiation process. One could argue that the hard line taken by Zulu leader Mangasuthu Buthelezi in the national negotiations is motivated by a resistance to Kwa-Zulu's incorporation into a unitary state in which cultural leaders would lose some of the power and privilege that they enjoyed under apartheid. At the same time, the rhetoric

used by Buthelezi reflects a strong awareness of a distinct Zulu culture, people who are jealous about their heritage and willing to go to war in order to protect it. To deny its significance would be silly, but that leaders like Buthelezi are not only products of apartheid but also now use the unfortunate outcomes of apartheid and the dubious notion of a culture to refer to a closed off political category of people, is not easily denied.

Thirdly, there are reactions to this type of cultural politics in the form of the Black Consciousness and Africanist movements which take up positions in direct opposition to white/European cultural and political dominance but are, at least by implication, congruent with the notion of casting socio-cultural groups into exclusivist categories.

Fourthly, there are of course the inclusivist ideologies emerging mainly from black South African politics, the non-racial African Nationalism being the main example. Here the approach is to not deny the multi-cultural and multi-linguistic nature of the society (witness the language policy of the ANC which acknowledges 11 formal languages) but nevertheless to place the emphasis on nationhood and non-racialism. As victims of racial and cultural repression based on the notion of exclusivity, the African Nationalist policies are in many ways a direct response to the

'incommensurable way-of-life' definition of culture.

The first three of the above reflect the assumption of internal homogeneity which is not accepted in the morphogenetic arguments presented in this study. Arguing against the Afrikaner Nationalist ideology of cultural exclusivity, morphogenetic logic states that the mere identification of a group is not sufficient to assume the existence of a homogeneously integrated and socio-culturally orderly social entity - that is, that all the members of the group share a core set of beliefs, ideas, values and interests. Even less can it be assumed that their social actions will reflect a similar consistency. Further, it cannot be assumed that all individuals in the group have an interest in maintaining the group and will have, know and use a set of ideas (or ideology) in order to promote or defend **their** group.

The general sociological and political implications of the above argument are that **the coherent socio-political character of social groups cannot be assumed.** For the purposes of this study, the above argument demands that separate consideration be given to the internal features and dynamics of groups if one wants to assess the reasons for success or failure of groups. The mere existence of a group that is associated with a certain ideology does not causally lead to successful agency and, conversely, the mere

articulation of an ideology or a set of ideas does not lead to social order. One cannot assume that those who are members of a group are equally motivated actors in pursuit of the apparently collective definition of the situation.

Archer (1988: 2) refers to the **myth of cultural integration** to describe the tendency in social theory to assume internal homogeneity and a high degree of consistency in the interpretations produced by people in similar social units or categories. She surveys the origin and development of the myth through German historicism, Malinowski, Benedict, Douglas, functionalist thinking, Sorokin, Parsons and Western humanistic Marxism and comes to the conclusion that the neat and all-inclusive notion of culture as a 'form of life' is highly problematic:

... to view culture as a 'community of shared meanings' meant eliding the community with the meanings (1988: 4)

The rejection of the myth and the assumptions underlying it is evidently important for this study. It allows one to observe the relationship between internal variation of groups regarding ideological consensus or dissensus as related to the success or failure of agency. Projects of intervention by social agents into the educational sphere would certainly have a greater chance of success if those associated with it did not have significant disagreement as to their views on educational and related matters. Instead of assuming the closedness of the 'dominant ideology thesis'

(Abercrombie *et al*, 1980) one should take note of significant ideological dissensus within groupings presumed to be neatly closed off from others in the South African situation. For instance, internal division has, arguably, been crucial in the defeat of classical apartheid through the defeat of the 'verkrampste' (die-hard) Nationalists at the hand of the generation of 'verligte' ('enlightened') Nationalists. Despite its apparent homogeneity there has always been significant ideological variation in Afrikaner ranks. Not only did these differences demand extensive ideational labour by leadership to keep it under control, but it did not always succeed and, for different reasons, kept on growing into sections and factions of followers who eventually found it intolerable to stay within the realm of the dominant Nationalist Party.

While it will never be conceded by the anti-apartheid opposition, who would want to claim that victory resulted from effective pressure and little else, there is considerable merit in the argument that the process of emergent ideological dissensus in the apparently homogeneous white Afrikaner politics should be regarded as a significant factor to be taken into account in explaining the 'failure of the ideology of apartheid'. The same applies in the case of the Mass Democratic Movement throughout the 1980s. Different traditions and ideological variations have always been engaged in differing degrees of struggle against one

another: Charterist, nationalist, Africanist, Black Consciousness, workerist, community, student, and so on. These were and still are divergent ideological positions within an apparently homogeneous movement. Again, one must explore the role of these differences in contributing to the relative failure of assertive agency throughout the 1980s.

On the theoretical level, Archer (1988) explains the emergence of this myth of cultural integration with reference to three general manifestations of the problem of cultural conflation which she describes as "elision of system integration with social integration" (p.xii-xiv) :

- (i) downwards conflation; (ii) upwards conflation and
- (iii) central conflation. These are all forms of reductionism and simplistic theorizing. I accept the general lines of these arguments and instead of reporting on the debate as having worked through it, I will proceed with the important work of exploring the explanatory capacity to be gained from the important distinctions made by Archer in terms of cultural system and socio-cultural conditions which set the context for certain kinds of interaction within which certain kinds of agents fail or succeed in achieving their educational objectives.

I will also return to the phenomenon of growing internal dissensus which proceeds despite efforts to unify and systematize ideologies. Theoretically, the origins of these

forms of ideological differences need to be considered as important sources of the failure of agency.

The concept culture - towards a morphogenetic approach

Before entering into the above complexities I will provide insight into the way in which Archer operationalizes the concept culture in order to start with exploring the culture/agency relationship. Acknowledging the breadth of the concept culture, Archer (1988: xvi) demarcates a sub-set of items:

.... culture as a whole is taken to refer to all intelligibilia, that is to any item which has the dispositional capacity of being understood by someone. Within this I then distinguish the Cultural System, which is a sub-set of items to which the law of contradiction can be applied. These are propositions, for only statements which assert truth or falsity can be deemed to be in contradiction or to be consistent with one another. In turn this means that the Cultural System is restricted to the propositional register of society at any given time. The justification for defining the CS in this way rests partly on the fact that it meets the criterion of methodological workability, but partly, too, on the self-evident importance of those things held to be true or false in society at any given time or place.

The above description is rich in its implications for this study despite the fact that it is clearly intended to limit the concept culture to that which can be worked with. It also steers clear of the vagueness of an all-inclusive concept of culture. In addition to Archer's demarcation, this study also justifies a further specification of the concept culture in order to put the focus on **ideas and ideologies**.

A brief clarification of the concept **ideology** is required. A survey of diverse usages of the concept ideology by the respected writers of the social sciences unveils a confusing ensemble without the profit of much conceptual clarity. At the most, a 'typical' definition of ideology contains a single element with irregular consistency and that is an emphasis on the negative, i.e. a distortion of reality by one group in domination of others (Lemert, 1992: 167). Thus it is often used to give a derogatory description of the ideas of the 'political other' as being distortions of the truth.

Without wasting unnecessary space, one could give an indication of the variety of views involved. Using the concept ideology in any of the following ways could provide one with a home in the academic wilderness within which the debate about ideology and culture is being conducted: as class consciousness or even a mere expression of material interests (Marx and the some Marxists), false consciousness (Lukacs, 1922/1968), distorted communication (Habermas, 1973, 1981), a hegemonic tool (Gramsci, 1971), more or less conscious deceptions and disguises of mainly political interests (Mannheim, 1936), expression of a 'form of life', redundant modernist notion sussed out by cynical streetwise people in post-modern society (Baudrillard, 1989, 1990). While this variety of views certainly gives one an

indication of the spectrum of confusion created by thinkers about ideology, it is not helpful for this study. The views of Gramsci are probably the most useful in the sense that he does not focus only on the ideas of the dominant, he does not see the application of the dominant ideology as automatically leading to domination, and he introduces the notions of persuasion (in addition to coercion) into the process of cultural production and reproduction.

Although one would not want to use it as justification to use a concept, it could be said that the disparate ways in which eminent social scientists have used the word ideology, give one the licence to use it as it suits one's ends.

In this study the concept will be used in a broad sense, in that it refers to the 'idea systems' used by both dominant and oppositional agents, whereas it is used in relation to the interests of groups as agents of interests and ideas in the general sense, and does not refer only to ideas which serve to legitimate the unjust and unnecessary forms of political or social domination. Rather it is assumed that the potentially distorting effects of interests apply to all people and groups. Ideologies here, then, are the set of ideas propounded by a group in relation to society and education to spell out their educational and other objectives. While talking about education as a social institution, one can hardly conceive of agents who will

enter the educational arena without a set of, or uninfluenced by, a set of ideas about education and society. Thus it is not only the dominant that would have a use for an educational ideology. Furthermore the emphasis is placed on the relationship between contending ideologies as held by contending groups in pursuit of enhancing their social and/or institutional power. In other words, none of the following are excluded: a system of ideas, values, interests, articulations, legitimations, unifications, rationalizations, universalizations, naturalizations, action-orientations, intellectualizations, distortions etc.'

The relative autonomy of ideas and ideologies

For the purposes of this study, then, it will be argued that besides all that has been said about the capacity of agents that derives from their more obvious agential and structural features, the ideas and ideologies that they hold still have a relative autonomy - that is, relative to the people holding the ideas. The emphasis always remains on **relative** and **interpretation**, and when the logical properties of ideas or ideologies come into play, they do so on the basis of: (i) how they condition (not determine) social agency, which means, (ii) that they have to be interpreted and responded to before they become socially relevant. What one has, then, is a relationship, and the approach to analysing this relationship will be to separate the social and the

ideological. In order to achieve this, a synthetic distinction is made between the orderly and conflictual relations in the cultural system and the orderly or conflictual relations between groups and individuals in society. That means that one makes a distinction between, on the one hand, the logical relations of contradiction or complementarity existing between components of the Cultural System (CS) - that is ideas, beliefs, values etc. held by groups in a society -and on the other hand Socio-Cultural (S-C) integration which refers to the causal relationship of consensus and dissensus over cultural components established between one group of people and another by processes of interpersonal influence (Archer,1988).

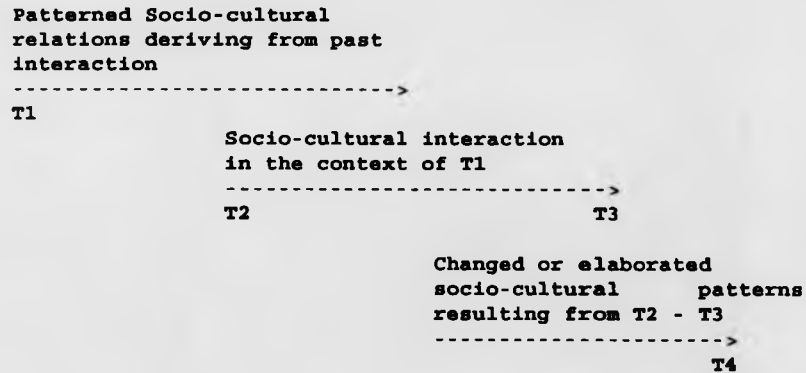
The implication of this move is that systemic features are separated from the actions engaged in by social actors in the context of variant structural and cultural conditions (1988:ix).

Let us pause and consider arguments against this strategy. As one can expect, there are strong arguments against such a move (see Williams, 1981, and others) which are to be seen in the context of the neo-Marxist debate. They are, at least to an extent, reactions against the reductionism and marginalization of culture in the base-superstructure theory of orthodox materialist Marxism. To the extent that they do not accept the limitations imposed by the Marxist orthodoxy,

I agree with these criticisms and clearly do not want to deny the complexity of the relationship between the socio-structural and cultural domains. In fact, I find any 'ontological separation' of this kind impossible to conceive.

But then, one could hardly be content with the methodological impotence resulting from such a conclusion - many complexities in the relationship between structure, culture and action will be left unexplored if we do not advance beyond this point. Therefore, the strategy adopted and implemented in this study is one based on analytical differentiation, and in practice amounts to what has been referred to as methodological relationalism, whereby the culture / agency relationship can be investigated in the same way as the structure / agency relationship. It requires a separation of the two, but maintaining the relationship by locating them in time, so that the relationship between the Cultural System as the conditioning context for Social Action and Socio-cultural action as the source of changes in the Cultural System can be explored. This means that the Cultural System provides the setting but is also the emergent outcome of socio-cultural interaction.

FIGURE 4: THE MORPHOGENESIS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL
RELATIONS



It must be clear that the approach adopted here does not suggest that cultural systems and socio-cultural action actually exist/occur at separate points in time. At the most, it points to the logic of causal relationships between cultural patterns present in the existing social relations, and then assists one to contextualize the socio-cultural action that occurs in that which is in itself again complicated by the relative autonomy of the agency and social structure. Thus the outcome (at T4) is the combined result of preconditioning and relatively autonomous agency.

The relationship is explained in causal terms but does not suggest a predictable outcome. The aim is to specify how systemic relationships condition action and to specify the range of possible reactions to such constraints or enablements (Archer, 1988: 144). By this approach 'conditioning' is distinguished from the determining effect

of relationships between individuals and groups. The focus is on "the effects of holding theories or beliefs which stand in particular logical relationship to other theories and beliefs - that is in relations of either contradiction or complementarity" (p.144). When arguing that the relations referred to are causal, it is suggested that the maintenance of ideas which stand in logical contradiction or complementarity to others, places their holders in different ideational positions, and that this affects their chances of successfully promoting such ideas. The logical properties of theories or beliefs create different situational logics for their holders. The effects mould the context of cultural action and in turn condition different patterns of ideational development. Subsequent socio-cultural interaction is marked in different ways by these differences in situational logic, as are the eventual modifications of the cultural system which are generated at the socio-cultural level (Archer, 1988: 144-5)

The formal properties of the Cultural System and the success or failure and agency

Included in the following section will be a discussion of the formal properties of the cultural system, namely contradictions and complementarities. These will each be considered in terms of the nature and effects on agency with the aim of considering the capacity of each to explain the success or failure of agency. More important, though, is

the morphogenetic transformation which occurs in both contradictions and complementarities because of the way in which people respond to them. This process will be considered in the light of the theme of the failure of agency.

Contradictions and Complementarities

Archer identifies two types of relations between ideas, systems of ideas, ideologies etc. namely **contradictions** and **complementarities**. In order to point towards their social implications she identifies two types in each case. In the case of contradictions, she refers to **constraining contradictions** and **competitive contradictions** and explains how the latter emerge out of the former. The same is done with consistencies / congruencies / congruents / complementarities, in which case she identifies **concomitant** and **contingent complementarities** and then explores how the latter emerge out of the agency which is conditioned by the former. All of these will be defined as they are dealt with in the text.

For the purposes of the current study, **Constraining Contradictions** are most important 'inhabitants' of the ideological landscape, since the South African society is one which is undeniably based on the essential contradiction between the free and the unfree. The objective here should be to come to an understanding of how such a situation

conditions the actions of the agents involved.

As a property of the Cultural System, constraining contradictions exist when two sets of ideas, A and B, are logically inconsistent with one another. Such a situation exerts a constraint upon the Socio-cultural level, that is on the relationships between groups wishing to hold the ideas. As explained by Archer, the crucial point is that once a protagonist for an idea (A) exists, the actual invoking of A also ineluctably invokes B and with it the logical contradiction between them. She explains further:

The reason for this is some necessary connection between A and B, that is, the 'dependence' of A on part of the general preserve of B. In this type of ideational relationship B constitutes the hostile environment in which A is embedded and from which it cannot be removed. For A cannot stand alone; it is compelled to call on B, to operate in terms of B, to address B, in order to work at all. This is part and parcel of the *theoretical* constitution of A; but part of the parcel that is B constitutes a threat to A because it simultaneously contravenes it (1988: 148-9).

Thus, those wanting to sustain A are heavily constrained. They cannot simply repudiate B for they must invoke part of it, but if B is fully actualized, it threatens to render A untenable. Since protagonists of A would, one would assume, want to hold on to A as long as possible, it follows that they will have to engage in ideational labour aimed at repairing the inconsistency with B. Since the relationship between A and B is a genuine logical contradiction, there is no direct resolution possible. The protagonists of A will have to exert effort to cover up or deal with the

consequences of this inconsistency.

It is important to note that the ideas of dominant groups could be held in social dominance even though they exist in a direct contradiction to ideas held by the subordinate members of society. However, it requires the application of strategic manoeuvres to contain the protagonists of alternative ideas and ideologies. Despite the fact that social power can be used to sustain ideological dominance for a long time, the situation is unlikely to last forever, simply because we are talking about a genuine contradiction. Nevertheless, the vital question is : **What could the protagonist of a threatened ideology do in order to avoid failure?** In other words, how can the situational logic be evaded? Archer discusses what she refers to as 'corrective exercises' that can be performed in order to repair the inconsistency between A and B, and uses the terms ideational syncretism to describe the general result - that is, the attempt to sink differences and effect union between the contradictory elements concerned.

According to Archer, ideational correction can follow three paths:

- i $A < B$ = Correcting B so that it becomes consistent with A
- ii $A < > B$ = Correcting both A and B so that they become mutually consistent

iii $A > B$ - Correcting A so that it becomes
consistent with B

The work described above is essentially ideational and not social. In other words it has to do with modifying ideas and not the socio-political manipulation of people as holders of ideas. While one should not be too rigid in identifying circumstances in which one strategy is likely to be preferred above the other by social actors, there are some interesting variations to be detected in South African history. Ideational manipulation, while not uncommon in the colonial context, has become a rather regular feature of the recent political dynamics in the contemporary South African society. On the other hand, colonial regimes could be more inclined to opt for power strategies instead of so-called hearts and minds strategies. One can safely assume such an inclination when considering the earlier described 'colonial mentality' which is characterized by arrogance and authoritarianism. Equally, the apartheid regime in phases when it was particularly rampant, like the 1960s, has also been inclined to opt for power strategies. On the other hand, when regimes are under severe threat they will easily abandon hearts and minds strategies to favour more power-orientated means of solving problems of order.

I will reflect on the dynamics in the late apartheid period to illustrate the three different possible versions of ideational manipulation. Both in the context of the

apartheid regime and the oppositional Mass Democratic Movement one could see a significant degree of ideational labour being applied in order to unify and iron out contradictions between its diverse sectional and ideational components. In the following discussion the three manoeuvres mentioned above will be illustrated by the state apartheid thinking (referred to as A) versus the non-racialism of the Mass Democratic Movement (referred to as B):

1) Correcting B so that it becomes consistent with A is an exercise performed by agents of A to impose a new definition of B on the situation. An example of this exercise is when the apartheid ideologues attempted to redefine anti-apartheid ideologies to correspond with separate development apartheid. This is a common move in recent times when the agents of the establishment 'plunder' the conceptual framework of the democratic movement as part of an attempt to transform notions of democracy into concepts which keep the dominant ideology intact. It involves the effort of getting the oppressed to accept their oppression as justified. Success is dependent on getting the redefined B to stick socio-culturally - in other words getting the victims of apartheid, for instance, to accept separate development ideology and abandon non-racialism! As this example would make obvious, the failure of the effort to manipulate the followers of B to abandon their original idea

could be a major cause for the failure of the holder of A's action. The exercise of redefining B may produce impressive results on the level of ideas - to formulate an alternative to the original A and B (because it seems to me that both A and B will have to undergo some redefinition, but that it is only B that loses its essential/defining character) but it will not easily be accepted by those committed to B because they could suspect the sincerity of the supporters of A. A's credibility has been too negatively affected by the exposure and awareness that was created by the original (and still existing) contradiction.

The point being made here is that it is not impossible to achieve an ideational redefinition of an oppositional ideology so that it becomes congruent with the dominant ideology, even in conditions like those prevailing in South Africa, but that the contradiction between the ideas of freedom and oppression is so clear, publicly-experienced and so starkly contrasted, that adopting the view of the dominant group holds the risk of being branded as a traitor or a sell-out. It will require at least a redefinition of both A and B for a correction to succeed.

ii) **Correcting both A and B so that they become mutually consistent.** This is something which is often attempted in the terrain of scientific theories, for instance, in the micro/macro debate in the social sciences and the

conflict/functionalism debate, with some measure of success (Coser, 1956, and Van den Berghe, 1963) but questions always remain as to the contradictions in terms of fundamental assumptions (see Frank, 1966/1974 about the failure to reconcile conflict and functionalist theory and see Archer, 1985, about some of the efforts to integrate micro and macro theories) with the result that these dualisms never simply disappear after efforts at synthesis which deny the basic contradictions.

In the terrain of social ideology ideational synthesis may be even less easily achieved, particularly in a social system characterized by severe conflict and polarization. The changes which follow on F.W. De Klerk's 2 February 1990 speech are supposed to be an example of such a 'miracle'. While neither side supposedly abandoned the crucial components of their ideologies, both Afrikaner Nationalists and African Nationalists made substantial modifications to their publicly propagated ideologies and even formed some form of partnership around a set of common causes.

One is tempted to explore the fascinating details of the mutual 'redefinition of the enemy' that has occurred over the past three years in South Africa, but space and time do not allow that. A few brief and very general remarks to illustrate the theoretical points will have to do.

The success of the current politics of negotiation is, arguably, based on and dependent on the success of such a manoeuvre. It requires a delicate balancing act on both sides of the major political divide in the country: the Afrikaner Nationalist ideologues have to move away from the ideas of Apartheid and the Total Onslaught in which the enemy is described as black people inspired by an external anti-Christian, Soviet-inspired communist movement intent on grabbing power, and the African Nationalists have to move away from the notion that white South Africa is *en bloc* racist and intent on exploitation or fighting to the bitter end to hold on to power, thereby justifying an ideology and strategy based on 'the revolutionary transfer of power to the masses'. While neither can afford to abandon crucial elements of their ideologies, they have to find new ground upon which they can justify their willingness to engage in negotiation with one another. Afrikaner Nationalists can hardly abandon their advocacy of 'group rights' or 'the right to self-determination of minority groups' and the African Nationalists can never renege on their promise to bring power to the disenfranchised majority. Both parties have been playing this game with remarkable skill, but have nevertheless not succeeded in convincing their followers to the extent that they could prevent the emergence of schisms and factions which typically occur in response to such a process. Both sides are now being accused of 'selling out' their people and are, on the eve of the first national

election, confronted with the problem of shrinking constituencies. As they move into middle ground, growing sections of their erstwhile followers remain at the radical edge. At the same time, both of these entities have to expand the new ground where they can meet and build on the basic concept that justified the compromise, but should also be the means of delivering the goods, namely negotiation. Items of taboo of the past reintroduced into the political debate by means of the addition of qualifications which make them 'transparent', make decision-makers 'accountable to the people', prevent 'unilateral decision-making etc.. This means that ideas unacceptable from the ANC point of view, like regionalism, private enterprise, even ethnicity are now accompanied by concepts like 'transformation', 'democratization', 'joint decision-making', 'affirmative action' and 'multi-culturalism' which make them more palatable. On the other hand, the leadership of the Nationalist Party has now accepted the idea of full political rights for all South Africans, as long as this is accompanied by a Bill of Rights that protects 'individual liberties', 'group rights', 'property rights' and 'free enterprise' (See Adam and Moodley, 1993: 39-70).

The effect is that the South African political vocabulary has changed rather drastically in the past months, and in many ways political success in the mainstream has now become a matter of using the right language as against a past in

which success was defined in more overt terms. However, from the point of view of the theme of this study, one is still left with the question of whether the new political discourse is a redefinition and not rather a failure of the dominant ideology. There are many other factors to consider, but few more important than the reality of a shift of power that has occurred, and while the ideological redefinition is an effort by the dominant group to soften the ideological content of a newly empowered opposition, the dominant group works from a position of a capitulation and surrendering of power, while the ANC and its allies work from a position of growing power. Afrikaner Nationalists perform the redefinition exercise in order to rationalize defeat and justify spaces for self-determination, while African Nationalists redefine positions and concepts in order to appease retreating whites. With skilled whites leaving the country in droves, the so-called goose that lays the golden egg may also be flying away.

In view of the last observations, the third manoeuvre is probably even more applicable in the South African context.

iii) Correcting A so that it becomes consistent with B is a strategy that could be motivated by a realization that the accommodation of B is imperative if A is to survive at all. This is then an admission of ideological failure, but nevertheless an attempt to salvage the defeated idea or

ideology by incorporating the victorious alternative into it by somehow redefining it in such terms that it does not contradict the previously contradictory ideology. The objective could be to retain social dominance, to make a strategic adjustment by which the 'mat is pulled from beneath the opposition' or simply to survive. Again, there are so many illustrations of such moves, particularly in Afrikaner Nationalist political thinking over the years, that one must resist the temptation of going on a writing spree. I will resist the temptation and provide only a few ideas as illustration of the type of ideational work involved.

Some people argue that apartheid started failing already by the end of the 1960s Verwoerdian apartheid, despite the zealous efforts of its advocates. It is also argued that Reform Apartheid based on the notion of 'separate development' was the start of some kind of reluctant liberalization in Afrikaner Nationalist thinking. Not only did the Verwoerdian idea of geographical segregation run on to the rocks of the reality of economic integration, but the other schemes like Bantu Education, with its focus on low-level skills for Africans, were having the unintended consequence of a growing skills-crisis in the technical/manufacturing sector (Giliomee and Schlemmer, 1989). In addition, South Africa was becoming isolated from the rest of the world as a part of the punitive sanctions being

applied in response to the anti-apartheid lobby. Even hardline Prime Ministers like John Vorster and his successor, P.W. Botha, continued with a policy of reluctant liberalization without breaking the racial paradigm and the anti-communist paranoia.

Thus, the amendment of the dominant ideology was intended to soften up the rhetoric by making it sound more 'liberal' in a way that was supposed to convince the rest of the world that the system was not inhumane and brutal. Few of these efforts were not failures.

The political intervention which De Klerk conducted in 1990 was, arguably, of a different degree but still in the same mould. Following in the wake of the end of the cold war and exploiting, with swift opportunism, the ensuing crisis of all Soviet-backed liberation movements, De Klerk conducted a move akin to a pre-emptive revolution. He apparently found the secret path to keeping the white minority feeling secure about their privileges while defusing the 'authentic revolution'. His growing popularity in the early stages among the whites lay in the implied promise that they would continue to dominate without much cost attached to change. The ideological rhetoric of 1990 is telling. De Klerk insisted that :

... to those who arrogantly equate the concept of the new South Africa to a takeover of power, the message needs to be transmitted loudly and clearly that the new

South Africa will not fall prey to a section of the population at the expense of the rest.

further,

We will not accept a dispensation in which the quality of existing liberties and rights is dismantled.

and finally, De Klerk asserted that his constituency was

not prepared to bow out apologetically from the stage of history" (whites would still play a "key role".)

(all the above quotes were cited in Adam and Moodley, 1993:40)

Of course, De Klerk and his advisors were working to cover a divide based on stark contradictions and clashes of interest, and he had to undo the mindset successfully inculcated in the Afrikaner political culture over many decades. Success was never guaranteed. Now, in the spring of 1993, the effort has arrived at its most fragile point - the costs of transformation and the risks involved in negotiations, have now started to dawn on the previous supporters of De Klerk and he is rapidly losing the strong support base that he had soon after February 1990.

To conclude this section on the ideational work that agents can perform to resolve underlying contradictions, a final remark is required to point out the parameters within which the debate about the failure of ideologies should be appreciated.

The last form of ideational manoeuvre often indicates the social demise of a belief or theory. It is not difficult to see that apartheid agency has failed insofar as it was an attempt to justify a racially divided society. It failed, and this is conceded by some of its most vociferous spokespeople, but the failure of apartheid as a structural phenomenon is something quite different. This much is also stated by the previous advocates of apartheid, in the sense that they often argue that it was an idea that did not work and "we realize and admit it". From a moral-political point of view this type of statement is rather intriguing because it does not contain an admission of guilt and an apology for the suffering caused. It merely states that the experiment "did not work", that is, that the idea failed to have the desired social effects. What could be read into these remarks is that the failure of apartheid does not mean the end of domination. What may then be occurring in the current political processes is that the same agents have adapted their ideology to the extent of it being almost compatible with non-racialism but, by replacing apartheid logic with, for instance, the logic of the marketplace, they are still in pursuit of the same structural outcomes. Or, at least, they may aim at entrenching the structural domination / privilege gained from the outcome of past interaction. The political debate set aside, what one is advocating by such an argument is the need to distinguish between power struggle and ideological struggle. They are certainly not

unrelated, but we need to understand the relationship and not deny a difference. The important point here is that when talking about the failure of agency, a group's ideology may be defeated, but it does not yet mean the 'failure of agency' in the conclusive social sense of the word.

Yet another facet of the argument that needs to be completed is to consider the **social manipulation** that dominant agents can engage in, in order to keep their ideas in ascendancy and thereby facilitate/complement the structural objectives pursued. Ideational labour as discussed above is often not sufficient for the dominant agent to maintain its dominance, or the type of social and cultural order to make the implementation of an institutional project possible. In other words, a group can lose the ideological struggle and then be faced with the options of further ideological manipulation, or to put the focus on people in a more direct sense of the word, that is, leave the ideology intact and manipulate people's perceptions, access to alternative ideologies and so forth. Again the dividing lines are not absolute, but the distinction has sufficient value for one to become aware of even more strategies that can be employed by a dominant group to maintain its position.

On the other hand a dominant group may simply be so arrogant that it does not consider the possibility of changing their ideas or the ideas held by others. Such groups may, then,

simply take social action in an effort to control people in terms of how they relate to ideas.

Social action to control the social visibility of contradiction

Constraining contradictions can condition holders to employ **strategic actions** either to forcefully impose their ideas, to conceal or contain the spread of the social visibility of contradictions, and the social exploitation thereof. The emphasis here is on the containment strategies available to the group that holds the power advantage in the social or institutional sphere (Archer, 1988: 189-197). Using Luke's (1974, 1977) notion of three dimensions of power, Archer explains three general forms of containment:

- i **Application of 'first-dimensional' power or coercion to repress ideational activity**
- ii **Application of 'second-dimensional' power strategy to manipulate the non-decision-making of others**
- iii **Third-dimensional power aimed at the strategic maintenance of ignorance among the population**

South African history is a goldmine for any researcher who wants to explore the diverse manifestations of the above strategies. It is with some degree of embarrassment that many white South Africans who travelled overseas during the apartheid years came to discover their own ignorance about events and people in their own country when they meet and become friends with black South Africans from whom they were segregated over the years. As a result of the relatively effective application of third-dimensional power, a degree

of ignorance (particularly among whites) was maintained among the population in order to prevent awareness of contradictions which existed between ideas held by group differentially positioned because of apartheid. The same apply to the application of second-dimensional strategies aimed at keeping the faithful insulated from alternatives, and preventing the internal debate about options from getting off the ground.

Unfortunately, both colonial society and apartheid society are characterized by more direct application of power to control ideational activity. The application of 'first-dimensional' power or 'authoritarian containment' describes one of the most common features of both the colonial and apartheid society. In essence, it amounts to the application of a 'fairly standard repertoire' of tactics aimed at limiting the circulation and access to alternative ideologies and ideas. Ways of achieving this aim are to forcefully 'shut up ' the opposition, simply keeping alternatives off the agenda by force, incarceration, banning, burning of books, censorship, control of mass media, forcing people into exile etc.. While it can be applied with awesome potency, this kind of strategy, being such a blatant one, also contains the most obvious weaknesses. These will be discussed later when the morphogenetic sources of failure are presented. With the recent examples being so obvious and further applications

being done in the substantial section on the colonial period, I will refrain from further discussion.

To summarize and link this section to the next: What has been discussed here are the dynamics following in the wake of a cultural system infested with constraining contradictions. Yet the aim of this study is to point out how and why the actions to maintain the morphostatic scenario eventually fail. This occurs when the above strategies do not effectively keep alternatives or competitive contradictions out of circulation. This is what will be discussed in section 5.5.4.

But the ideational components favouring dominant ideology have not been exhausted - despite the morphostatic context, and particularly the colonial and apartheid society, being so marked by repressed contradictions, the cultural domain does not necessarily exclude **complementarities**. Going back to the earlier description of the extreme morphostatic scenario, one becomes aware of the extent to which ideational order could derive from apparent consensus on the ideological level between groups who do not necessarily share the same interests. Archer's explanation for this is that these groups too are "constrained by the absence of ideational or organizational alternative", are "trapped in the only kind of cultural discourse which is currently in social parlance" and thus "have no immediate alternative but

to live together".

Even so, there are real complementarities to be explored and questions to be asked about their implications. Before looking at this, the concepts must be clarified.

Archer (1988) uses the term **Concomitant Complementarities** to describe features of the Cultural System which stand in complementary relationship to one another. Their effect is the direct opposite of Constraining Contradictions. She uses the concept **contingent complementarities** to describe an emergent form of complementarity which is only significant for the purposes of the study to the extent that it initially adds to the pool of ideas which can facilitate the ongoing dominance of existing dominant ideas, but at the same time also adds to the complexity of the cultural system, thereby making domination of any single set of ideas more difficult.

Archer (1988: 153) describes the effect of concomitant complementarities in the following way:

When invoking A also ineluctably evokes B, but since the B upon which this A depends is consistent with it, then B buttresses adherence to A. Consequently A occupies a congenial environment of ideas, the exploration of which, far from being fraught with danger, offers reinforcement, clarification, confirmation and vindication.

As an example from the study, colonialism, racism,

Eurocentrism, Darwinism and Missionary Christianity are all part of a complex of ideas which complemented one another and moulded an environment in which a certain degree of co-operation between the protagonists of all these was facilitated. Complementing one another over time as part of the ongoing maintenance of European/white domination, the ideationally complementary relationship between colonialism and apartheid formed the basis of the extension of this study from a focus on the colonial period to the contemporary period. The ideological exhortations of apartheid ideologues in the 1950s occurred in an environment where racism and white domination were already entrenched.

The effect is that concomitant complementarities create a problem-free environment and allow easy transmission and elaboration of ideas so related. Their holders are socially enabled and experience less social opposition because of the advocacy of the ideology. But, looking at the effect of ideational complementarities from another angle, one becomes aware, once again, of the subtle way in which morphogenetic processes are at work, even in a context characterized by complementarities enabling the dominant group. I provide this rather lengthy extract from Archer since it gives such an accurate description of the syndrome of the ideological protection and socio-political naivety in which Afrikaner Nationalism has become entangled. She explains that the situational logic of concomitant complementarity ...

pushes no one to the door for it makes staying inside seem cosily inviting. However, cosiness is the close ally of closure. Over time the situational logic fosters a negative feed-back loop which discourages alterations in the felicitous cluster of items making for concomitant consistency.

Consequently the adherents of A are enmeshed in the cluster forming the concomitant compatibility and insulated against those outside it. Yet, because their 'truths' are not challenged but only reinforced from the proximate environment, then actors confront no ideational problems, are propelled to no daring feats of intellectual elaboration, but work according to a situational logic which stimulates nothing beyond cultural embroidery. The net effect of which is to reduce Systemic diversity to variations on a theme (which do however increase its density) and to intensify Socio-Cultural uniformity (through the absence of alternatives). In brief the situational logic of concomitant compatibility conduces towards **protection** (the maintenance of purity), not **correction** (1988: 157-8).

The situational logic of concomitant complementarities urges the holders of complementary ideas to **unify** and **systematize** the different and perceived-to-be compatible ideational items in order to protect the parts and the whole. In the process, boundaries between the cluster of complementarities and alternatives thereto are made more pronounced. From the point of view of a dominant agent, the object of these efforts is clearly the protection or pursuit of cultural hegemony and the reproduction of agential ideas in the social arena. Yet, as it will be pointed out later, there is another side to this coin. The point to make here is that dominant groups are often aided in their projects by the fact that their discourse is the only one around, and that other elites from their own perspective could add items to

the dominant culture by working towards expanding and systematizing an ideology. Ironically, it is in this same process of expanding and attempting to unify idea systems, that agents introduce destabilizing forces and processes into the ideas system. These derive even from the activity of refining arguments and ideologies in defence against real or possible threat. By asking critical questions about one's own ideas in anticipation of the criticism which others may have, one could discover reasons to develop alternatives or modifications to the existing idea system.

5 The Morphogenesis of Agency - The Social Origins Failure

The study now moves on to develop arguments to uncover sources of agency failure that emerge out of the complexities of the mutually-modifying interplay between structure/culture and agency. The emphasis remains on the failure of dominant groups and I believe that the arguments are being made particularly potent by concentrating on dominant agents in a milieu that favours their ongoing dominance.

It is argued in this study that the sources of change in social systems are often misunderstood or, at least, that certain sources of change are often under-appreciated as a result of placing too much emphasis on single variables like opposition, the quality of ideas etc, all of which are only one side of the **relational complex**. The explanation for

social change which underpins the arguments in this study places the focus on morphogenetic sources of change, that is, it is concerned with change that emerges from the interplay between aspects of the social system and people as agents of interests and ideas, rather than from any single systemic component. The implication is that the significance of typical sources of changes, like for instance opposition, is not being denied, but its effect is explained as being entangled with the systemic variables and the social impact of other agents.

Contrary to many other approaches to change, the approach followed here does not promise certainty about the outcome of social change. For that, there are simply too many variables which are regarded as significant, and, in addition, the approach makes a particular statement about the indeterminability of social outcomes with its emphasis on the *emergence* of structural/cultural and agential changes as an unintended outcome of their interplay (see Bohman, 1991, on the problems of indeterminacy).

Equally, this study is not an effort to pin down the reasons why dominant agents fail, but to put the phenomenon in the context of the morphogenetic framework. Thus the morphogenetic perspective could, in a sense, be seen as facilitating the exploration of diverse sources for change/failure by reinterpreting the conventional

explanations and then restating them in relational terms.

This does not take away the fact that the morphogenetic perspective provides its own explanations - it is not an exercise in the stringing together of the theories of others. In addition to other sources of change/failure, some particularly subtle sources of failure will be explored here, which, I will argue, are only adequately explicable by using the logic of the morphogenetic perspective. In the process a conceptual framework is also being drafted, in order to explain the failure of dominant agency in colonial society and eventually apartheid society. As will be demonstrated in Section B, the failure of regimes in the Cape Colony to succeed in their social and educational projects was not so much the result of direct opposition (or some other more obvious reason) as the unintended outcome of interaction. The complex features of interaction in the colonial society were conditioned by the structural and cultural features of the colonial society as a social system, characterized by processes that repressed and denied the agency of diverse interests and ideas - in other words, as a form of morphostasis. The underlying argument is that the social, institutional and cultural features of the colonial society conditioned actions of a certain variety which in themselves had the effect of either maintaining the status quo, or introducing the beginnings of change, but also that the agents of order or change themselves were

transformed in ways which few would have anticipated. As a consequence, that which they saw as social and institutional objectives in earlier social context was abandoned and modified in response, on the one hand, to the changed context, but on the other hand, as a response to changes in the agents themselves. When talking about failure, it will be identified as occurring in diverse ways and from diverse sources, but it is this, more subtle, source of change which is of particular interest. At the risk of simplification, the concern here is with failure as conditioned by the inherent systemic features of societies characterized by arrogant, authoritarian, dominant regimes.

In order to explain the notion of the failure of agency in the fashion anticipated above, the approach here will be to use the concept morphogenesis which describes just the opposite of the morphostatic scenario focused on up to this point. Throughout the preceding discussion of the morphostatic scenario, it was clear that it is change and not the persistence of the colonial order which is being explored. The section that follows takes up the argument from this juncture to prepare the conceptual framework within which change and failure of agency will be explored.

Again, the text will initially bear particularly close resemblance to the prose of Archer as contained in *The Morphogenesis of Agency* (1989) since there is no reason to

introduce significant changes in the sections selected for its utility.

5.2 The Morphogenetic Scenario and the Social

Conditioning of Failure

Looking at it from the viewpoint of the relationship between agents, the morphogenetic scenario displays features directly opposite to the previous scenario. In this situation there is a progressive expansion of the number of Corporate Agents and a divergence of interests represented by them, resulting in substantial conflict between them. Accompanying this process is a complementary shrinkage of Primary Agents, due in part to their mobilization to join burgeoning promotive interest groups, and in part to the formation of new social movements and defensive associations, as some of them combine to form novel types of Corporate Agency.

Theoretically, this situation has its origins in the morphostatic scenario, namely with self-conscious Vested Interest Groups defined in a prior socio-cultural context. The features of the morphostatic scenario describe the conditions that increase the chances of Vested Interest Groups to go on protecting the benefits received from their pre-defined positions by being able to protract the status quo which generated this state of affairs.

However, as discussed by Archer in *Culture and Agency* (1988), in the long run (sometimes the very long run) the defensive strategies of Vested Interest Groups (both material and ideal) generate agency at variance with them. This is very important for the purposes of this study. She explains:

They do this by spawning social differentiation and ideational diversification as part and parcel of the pursuit of vested interests. This process which expands the number of Corporate Agents alters the nature of their relationship, is greatly accelerated by disjunctions between morphostasis and morphogenesis in the structure and cultural domains. Let one enter a morphogenetic sequence and the newly differentiated groups to emerge or the new ideas made salient speed up the process of re-grouping, as ideas gain organized sponsors and nascent organizations gain powers of self-expression (1989: 19).

In turn, the co-existence of a plurality of Corporate Agents seeking to push and pull systemic or institutional structure in different directions has profound effects on reshaping the context for Primary Agents and re-moulding the situation in which they find themselves. Collective reactions to the new context create new environmental problems for Corporate Agents and constitute enabling factors for others, since Corporate Agency is no longer consensual. Collective counter-reactions also take the form of new Corporate Agents, thus further complicating interaction.

Now clearly, this process suggests the emergence of conditions unfavourable for the ongoing dominance of the

dominant social agent. Equally, it points to the accompanying transformation that occurs in agents owing to their interaction in specific conditions. The notions of **emergence of conditions** and the **transformation of agency** is of particular importance here, since it points out that these conditions have their origin in the relationship between agency and contextual / systemic conditions, and that it is not only contextual changes that occur, but also agential ones. The challenge is to substantiate the emergence of conditions conducive to the failure of agency, and at the same time to explain how the transformation of agency is related to the failure of agency.

Of course, these sources of failure are different from the sources usually presented in sociological literature, in that the conventional explanations seek to locate the source of success or failure in a single variable; ideologically-motivated arguments find reasons for locating success or failure in 'given' features of either the situation or the agents, because either the system or the individual must be blamed or credited for failure or success. This study attempts to find reasons for success or failure of agency in the complex dynamics of relations between the agents and their environment, and is not intent on placing the blame somewhere where it is politically correct. Even when the emphasis is placed on 'morphostatic societies', the structure of such societies is not offered as sufficient to

cause change.

It needs to be pointed out here that this study is not only a theoretical exercise, nor primarily concerned with the colonial society *per se*, but that there is also a pre-occupation with societies, institutional arrangements and social situations characterized by enforced homogeneity and a repression of diversity. The apartheid society is a modern-day exemplar of this type of society, but included are fascist, totalitarian, racist, etc societies. For the sake of opening up the discussion, I will entertain a brief consideration of the notion of 'in-built' failure into societies of this kind.

The seeds of failure contained in societies characterized by enforced homogeneity and conformity

It is part of popular wisdom that in societies in which people are not allowed to express themselves in terms of diverse interests and ideas, change will come to undo such a situation, and that 'it is only a matter of time'. Perhaps because of one's own personal and ideological convictions, one does not hesitate to state that this is part of a personal worldview. But it will not be argued that this is the case on the basis of some metaphysical notion of the inevitability of change. Instead, this study is part of a serious endeavour to substantiate the argument that features of social systems should be understood for the conditioning

effects that they have on the actions of people, and that we as social scientists/actors would be able to enhance our strategic capacity and that of others if we could gain greater understanding into this phenomenon.

In describing 'morphostatic societies' one becomes aware of an irony built into these societies. This feeling of paradox that promises the eventual failure of domination is one which one can probably only understand if you live in such a society. The irony is that, that which gave the dominant group the power to succeed originally to be or to become dominant, becomes a crucial factor leading to its failure - that is, the denial and oppression of 'the other'. In other words, through institutionalizing selfish one-directional interaction and the repression of diverse overt interests-based reciprocal interaction / exchange / negotiation of social outcomes, the dominant group makes its contribution to setting the conditions for the occurrence or absence of other factors. By ensuring the relative absence of feedback, it cuts itself off from information and thereby reduces its self-correcting and strategic capacity. In the long run, even the most powerful groups start suffering the unintended consequences of such interaction. While there is an absence of 'negotiation', there is still interaction - it is interaction of a negative kind, i.e. domination. As a form of interaction, domination is likely to elicit at least the desire to resist or actually to oppose the dominating

party. In terms of the logic of methodological relationalism, it is important to point out that even in the most extreme situation of domination there is always the other side of the relationship, and not a vacuum in which nothing happens - despite the enforced silences.

Resulting from the lack of overt feedback, there is a tendency in dominant groups, in their arrogance, often to misinterpret, disregard or underestimate the nature and degree of oppositional interests and the assertive quality of oppositional agents. Hence, the social and institutional interaction during the implementation of the decisions of the monopolistically-taken decisions is conditioned to involve an almost inevitable growth of resistance because of the lack of communication / interaction with the subordinate groups - from relatively powerful ones to the unorganized and atomistic responses from the grassroots. Resistance is then easily misinterpreted in its initial stages by the dominant group, and it can lead to strategic mistakes in dealing with opposition.

Let me illustrate the point with reference to the self-defeat of apartheid. During the apartheid era, opposition was typically seen as "inspired by a Communist Plot". The legitimate protestors of Soweto 1976 were seen as puppets being orchestrated by external forces with objectives unrelated to the internal situation. Instead of introducing

democratic structures through which feedback could be ensured, the State used intelligence gathered by paranoid security agencies which reinterpreted all information to fit into the Cold War scenario. Thus, instead of instituting reciprocal interaction, the state embarked on its 'Total Strategy' by declaring a State of Emergency in the 1980s, thereby virtually closing off the other strategic options, since subordinate groups were defined as threats to the state and society as a whole. In a sense, the apartheid regime thereby did more than create an opposition, it also ensured that from that point onwards the internal conflict became a 'war of attrition' - it would only be a matter of who would first run out of satisfying explanations to their followers for the loss of lives incurred during the armed struggle. There was no real possibility that opposition could be quenched by the State of Emergency, and the state was not intent on addressing the circumstances which conditioned mass resistance. The solution to the conflict originally lay in democratization, i.e. in the successful implementation of structures facilitating reciprocal interaction whereby the needs and interests of the majority of the population could be fed into the polity. But with the dominant group's definition of the situation and response to it, the solution became dependent on the outcome of a virtual civil war which was unlikely to be won by the regime. The repression of resistance (change) was in effect the beginning of the end of domination.

Clearly, what is being said here is that **even** the most severe means of maintaining the status quo served as a powerful trigger of change and the failure of the dominant group. Indeed, this argument will still have to be validated by the outcome of the current political dynamics.

Another almost inevitable implication of the absence of means of feedback that can be linked to the 'failure of dominant agency thesis' is the conditioned causality of accountability and corruption. Power is ill-checked in a society characterized by a lack of reciprocal exchange, and consequently corruption is well-facilitated and well-hidden until after the first cracks pointing to potential breakdown appear. Once defections of those who fear being trapped in the sinking ship start, the cover-up of corruption is threatened. Then it becomes visible how, underneath the short-term success, aided by corruption, there is the seed of ultimate failure. Not only does this tendency of exposures by previous confidants and insiders, in itself, threaten the dominant group, but the exposure of their corruption provides the first glimpses of the hidden contradictions and fissures within the dominant group's actions and ideas. A good illustration of this is the contradictory practices under Stalinism and the more recent cases of self-enrichment among the apparachics of the Soviet and Eastern European societies, which were exposed by the

revolution of 1989/90. In all these societies egalitarianism was the essential element of the state ideology. In South Africa the media have been cluttered with examples over the past months of corruption by government officials, who for many years succeeded in portraying a public face of spartan austerity.

What is then suggested, at this stage, is that the powerful can outwardly be fairly successful in their institutional and social pursuits and even remain in power for a relatively long period of time, but, morphogenetically speaking, systems characterized by one-sided interaction tend to run down because of their lack of internal self-regulation. This is a crucial point for the purposes of this study: despite manifest success in maintaining a so-called 'morphostatic scenario', change always takes place : there is never an absence of morphogenesis because there is always some interaction even between the most powerful and the weakest if they are participants in an institutional arena. However infrequent the overt interaction, what there is in terms of a relationship tends to take on a quality which ostensibly favours the interests of the dominant, but is at the same time potentially entropic - that is, it serves to run down the system which operates in the favour of the dominant group. This is the paradox referred to earlier -in this case entropy (in Buckley's terms a 'morphostatic process') is an inherent part of

morphogenesis. Stated with caution, it means that processes of destruction are at the same time processes of growth, to the extent that such processes constrain the dominant and enhances the capacity of the subordinate. Thus, morphogenesis always occurs, and a process like entropy occurs in a system to constrain the dominant, but at the same time to enable the dominated or emergent groups of the society - it contributes to the failure of the apparently successful and to the success of the apparently unsuccessful.

5.2 The Morphogenesis of Agency and Failure

At the heart of this study lies the insight that social agents become transformed in the process of their interaction with others. This process of transformation is described by the concept morphogenesis of agency because the changes that occur in the group or agent emerge out of the social interaction between social groups. Of course, the possibility of externally imposed transformations is not denied, but in this study the effort is to explain how change emerges from 'within' the social system. This information is then utilized to explain the inability of even powerful groups to achieve the objectives that they set for themselves.

To explain the above, the basic material required is the morphogenetic cycle in which the mutually-reinforcing

relationship between the structural and cultural context on the one hand and agency on the other hand is explained. To repeat the summary of the **morphogenesis of agency**, as explained earlier, the morphogenetic cycle contains three phases which contain separate propositions about: (i) **The conditions under which agency operates**, many of which are not of its own making. This refers to the fact that people are all born into a structural and cultural context which is the unintended result of past interaction among their predecessors. Simultaneously, people acquire vested interests in maintenance or change, according to the privileged or under-privileged positions that they occupy and whether the situations they confront are sources of rewarding or frustrating experiences. (ii) These are conditional effects : to be socially efficacious they **have to be taken up, articulated and acted upon**. Conditioning is mediated through the actor's situations which supply reasons for pursuing maintenance or change (retaining benefits or overcoming obstacles) which work on vested interests. (iii) **The structural and cultural outcome** is the product of social agency. However, the outcome is rarely exactly what any particular agent wants. Not only does it include overt compromises and concessions thrashed out during the middle phase, but also the unintended consequences of interaction. Such aggregate and emergent properties constitute features of structure and culture which condition the next cycle of interaction.

At the same time, however, agency will have transformed itself as part and parcel of the process of working for social stability or change. The elaboration of agency contains its own quota of unintended consequences which are equally potent in conditioning subsequent interaction by delineating groups standing in different relations to one another and with differential chances of prevailing over others and influencing systemic outcomes.

Contained in the above is the important notion of the **double morphogenesis** which is a typical relational concept denoting the cyclic effect of action and conditioning of action in the form of contextual variables, suggesting that the structural and cultural changes that result from agency at the same time result in the transformation of the agent.

How does this happen? Archer (1989:20) provides extensive illustrations of the actual process by which Primary Agents are transformed into Corporate Agents, and summarizes the process in ten propositions. The following set of nine propositions is a slightly amended version for the purposes of this study:

- 1 Agents enter interaction situations differentially endowed: initial distributions of structural and cultural properties delineate Corporate Agents and distinguish them from Primary Agents at the start of

each cycle.

- ii Corporate Agents are enabled to maintain / re-model the socio-cultural system and its institutional parts; Primary Agents tend to work within the framework set by Corporate Agents.
- iii Systemic change is mediated through alterations in actors' situations: Corporate Agents alter the context in which Primary Agents perform and Primary Agents alter the environment in which Corporate Agents operate.
- iv The categories of Corporate and Primary Agents are redefined over time through interaction in pursuit of social stability or change.
- v Actions by Corporate and Primary Agents constrain and enable one another.
- vi Action by Primary Agents constitutes atomistic reaction, unco-ordinated co-action or associational interaction, depending upon the extent of their participation in a given institutional context.
- vii Interaction of Corporate Agents generates emergent properties: actions of Primary Agents produce aggregate effects.
- viii The elaboration of social agency (societally or sectionally) consists of the shrinkage of the category of Primary Agents, who become incorporated or transformed into Corporate Agents, thus swelling this category.

ix Social change is the result of aggregate effects produced by Primary Agents in conjunction with emergent properties generated by Corporate Agents and thus does not approximate to what anyone wants.

In Archer's discussion of the morphogenesis of agency the emphasis falls on the quantitative transformation of agency. She does not ignore qualitative transformations but is mainly concerned with the transition from numerically insignificant to substantially enabled agents. There is work that can be done to elaborate on the qualitative transformation of agency. In this study the notion of 'the morphogenesis of agency' places the focus on the transformation from Primary to Corporate Agency highlighting changes on the level of their interaction and their changed institutional objectives.

In general, then, agents change because they have to respond differently to changed environments which they themselves have changed. This manifests itself in diverse fashions in the substance of this study, for instance :

- * in the form of Primary Agents being transformed into Corporate Agents in their response to domination.
- * Corporate Agents being transformed in terms of the strategies that they adopt in order to achieve original goals.
- * Corporate Agents being transformed in terms of their

objectives because of the response of other agents, by adopting modified or new institutional objectives.

At the most basic level, the mere reality of social domination or the monopolistic control of an institutional sphere like education presents the disadvantaged with reasons to respond. In the case of early the Afrikaner response to the British, we observe a process whereby Primary Agents become Corporate Agents. In this case, atomistic action becomes co-ordinated instrumental action. The morphogenesis of the Primary Agent starts when fragmented and disorganized actions are united into goal-directed actions in response to the ongoing monopolistic actions of the dominant agent. The simultaneous morphogenesis of the Corporate Agent is again related to how it responds to the challenge posed. It is likely to decide that it needs to fight back and defend its interests, making it more ruthless. It could also, once it starts realizing that the new Corporate Agent is not going to be suppressed, change strategies. Depending on things like resources, numbers and counter-ideologies, alliances etc., dominant agents could become compromising competitors, once they realize that more blatant coercion is becoming self-defeating. They could actually abandon original projects because they are becoming redundant because of changes in the environment.

Putting the focus on dominant agents - what is being argued here is that in the process of responding to other agents, changes emerge in the character of the original agent, amounting to a discrepancy between the original agent and the objectives held and objectives reformulated, or new objectives in response to a changed environment - changed, ironically, by its own actions. It is in this process that failure of dominant agents is being identified - one is referring to failure in the sense of not being able to achieve specifically conceptualized objectives and, while it is not excluded, one is not necessarily talking about failing in the struggle for social power.

5.3 The Morphogenesis of Structural / Institutional

Relations and the Failure of Dominant Agency

When analyzing the reasons for the failure of agency and utilizing the notion of the **double morphogenesis**, one would want to explain how agents fail because of the strains and contradictions which emerge between their original objectives and the unintended changed structural outcomes of their own actions. Thus, besides agents being changed in their own character and in relation to one another, and therefore developing altered positions in relation to their original objectives, one would also want to explain that agents fail in pursuit of original objectives in the context of specific institutional changes that result from their actions. This is the full story-line as it unfolds in

Archer's *Social Origins of Educational Systems* (1979, 1984)

In explaining the **morphogenesis of structure** she describes the transformation of educational arrangements from a 'private enterprise' to a state system.

A state system is explored as an emergent outcome of the foregoing interaction. By **education as a private enterprise** is meant that ...

one particular group virtually monopolizes formal education meant that education was firmly linked to only a single part of the total social structure, namely that institution with which the dominant group was associated The link consisted of the flow of physical, human and financial resources from the ownership sphere to education and the counter-flow of educational services, appropriate to the dominating sector (Archer, 1984: 21-22).

And a **state education system** is defined as a :

nation-wide, differentiated collection of institutions devoted to formal education, whose overall control and supervision is at least partly governmental, and whose component parts are related to one another (Archer, 1984: 19).

Since there is up to the present in South Africa still not an institutional arrangement in education that can be described as a state system, Archer's description of structural morphogenesis applies only in a limited sense. A cautious analysis of the present situation may uncover the ways in which there are similarities and differences between what is happening at the moment in South African education and the transformation from pre-state to state systems in

the work of Archer. But this issue is part of the bigger project of which this current study is only a forerunner (see more about work to be done in this respect in Conclusions and Contemporary Relevance).

Consequently, the discussion of the transformation of institutional structure as explained by Archer will be presented with a limited application in mind; **the focus will still be on the conditioning effects of structural features and the way in which they could be linked to the failure of agency.** Thus the emphasis here is more on the agency side of the structure-agency equation. In anticipation of concentrating on the colonial society which, as far as educational arrangements were concerned, can be seen in terms similar to Archer's 'education as a private enterprise', the intention here is to explore some of the more subtle ways in which institutional dominance affects the outcome of agency.

Institutional monopolism and failure

Archer uses the term 'mono-integration' in order to describe the structural nature of the relationship between institutions in a morphostatic scenario like the colonial and apartheid society. As explained earlier, such a relationship has two major implications, (1) narrowness of education provided and (2) the divisions of groups into two groups: owners and subordinates.

This division in agency has certain obvious implications in terms of the potential for conflict and resistance. In what follows these will be explored but, in addition, some less obvious reasons for success/failure will be identified. Besides the difference, there are also a few common threads that run through all of these explanations: from a morphogenetic point of view all are descriptions of failure deriving from relational dynamics, all make their contribution to unintended outcomes and the transformation of structure/culture and agency occurs as a reason for failure on an ongoing basis.

Building on the earlier mentioned features of the monopolistic arrangement, and without going through what has been said before, I will proceed to identify the five main sources of failure in such a situation of institutional monopoly:

- i Direct opposition
- ii Indirect opposition in the form of resistance
- iii Unintended consequences deriving from a narrow definition of education
- iv Strategic mistakes deriving from relative absence of self-regulatory interaction
- v Unintended consequences deriving from structure/culture - agency complexities

These will be discussed briefly.

i) **Direct opposition**

One should start with an explanation of why conflict and eventually failure are built into a monopolistic system by confirming the crucial point, that one is talking about a type of relationship in which one group controls and defines education narrowly to serve its own needs and thereby excludes the needs and wants of others from the educational menu. The logical implication is that the changes required by those who are **excluded or obstructed** will be not merely modification or shifts in balance, but radical to the extent that all the changes that they demand will stand to clash with the interests of the dominant - this relationship is based on a contradiction. Yet radical change that will cater for the needs of the obstructed groups is unlikely to occur through negotiation. In the extreme situation, such as a colonial and apartheid society, every concession resulting from negotiation is a step towards losing power to the benefit of the 'enemy' - it amounts to a direct undermining of the dominant group's self-interest. With negotiation being unlikely, more direct conflict is almost inevitable. Major changes will only result in the ownership of the dominant group being destroyed or damaged by the action of opposition or resistance, by which the dominant agent is pushed to capitulation. Ultimately, the structural strains can only be resolved if the one party is overcome by the other.

Thus, obstructed groups are conditioned by the logic of the situation to engage in oppositional activities. But they will not simply proceed to act in opposition. Similar to the position of the dominant group, there are basic and necessary conditions for successful assertion / struggle related to the capacity of oppositional groups to challenge the dominant group. The capacity of success for the oppositional assertive agency is related to its ability to evade constraints, to reject its ideology and to damage its monopoly. Thus opposition must (1) acquire bargaining power, i.e. sufficient numerical support and organizational strength to challenge domination, (2) develop a counter-ideology and (3) engage successfully in instrumental activities to devalue the dominant group's monopoly.

The instrumental activities of oppositional groups to devalue the monopoly of the dominant group can take two forms : **substitution** or **restriction**. Archer (1984:47-8) reminds the reader that these two activities correspond with the two ways Peter Blau (1964) outlines through which power can be undermined, and then proceeds to describe **substitution** as :

replacing the supply of educational facilities, which the dominant group had monopolized, by new ones. In practice this means devaluing its monopoly by building and maintaining new schools and recruiting, training and paying new teachers to staff them. Here domination is challenged by competition on the educational market - the aim of the assertive group being to price the dominant party out of it or to relegate it to a small corner of the market. In either case, a transfer of control takes place and macroscopic changes are

introduced.

Restriction on the other hand,

consists of removing some of the facilities owned by the dominant group, or preventing it from supplying these resources to the educational sphere. Thus, the monopoly is devalued coercively; buildings may be appropriated, educational funds confiscated, or personnel excluded from teaching and administration. Here domination is challenged, not by market competition but by coercive power -the aim being the forcible transfer of educational control.

It is important to one's understanding of the failure of oppositional agency to realize that for a group to utilize restriction with relative success as an oppositional strategy requires a substantial degree of **political power**, and consequently its failure could be relatively enduring as long as it fails to enhance its direct political power or align itself successfully with another powerful group. For successful substitution a group needs access to some degree of **economic surplus**, to devalue the existing monopoly of educational facilities.

Archer (1984: 48) explains that the nature and timing of confrontation between domination and assertion depend upon the balance of factors present on the two sides. There are two limiting cases:

unchallenged domination, when no group has acquired any of the factors necessary for assertion (which corresponds with institutional stability), and, on the other hand, a situation where the prerequisites of domination are matched by the preconditions for assertion (which corresponds with institutional conflict).

It must immediately be noted that in the colonial and

apartheid situations, such a direct form of opposition is rather unlikely. In the apartheid society, opposition to the educational status quo failed up to and through the 1980s because of the double deprivation of political and economic power suffered by anti-apartheid opposition. In the same fashion, opposition does not easily develop to adequate capacity in a colonial situation. The basic reasons have been pointed out on a number of occasions in this study: the power differentials on the macro social level do not allow much political space to be manipulative, not even to speak of being competitive.

Colonized people, as black people under apartheid, are not even regarded as citizens of their countries. Cecil John Rhodes, the architect of many of the features of British Imperialism in Southern Africa, argued in the Cape parliament in 1896 that :

The native is to be treated as a child and denied the franchise. We must adopt a system of despotism in our relationship with him (cited in Mungazi, 1989:46).

The political structures resulting from such extreme thinking have had the sociological effect that certain options have been ruled out on the macro socio-political level.

At the same time, it is unlikely in such a situation that oppressed people will enter into a national education system under the political control of the same polity. Where

education is also controlled by the dominant group in a polity that lacks legitimacy in the eyes of the dominated, they can morally/politically-speaking not afford to embrace the imposed system. In the apartheid situation, black people had to make do and bear with the system of Bantu Education, but only up to a point did they take it. The only 'escape route' was to go into exile, as many thousands of black youths did following the events of 1976. If there had been other ways out, they would probably have been taken. A similar case was that of Dutch-speaking burghers of the 1830s who left the Cape Colony instead of accepting the anglicization project of the colonial regime. The youths of Soweto also saw only one way out of the situation and if they had not left they would have been unlikely to have entered into negotiation with the regime.

The point being made here is that there is little possibility of macro / structural change deriving from the opposing agents **negotiating** themselves into a state system as long as it occurs in the context of the political control of the oppressive monopolist like a colonial authority or the apartheid regime. The political costs involved are too high - the dominated would not want to enter into a state system because it would be on the terms of the dominant, which they cannot accept, and the dominant is unlikely to negotiate because it means capitulation.

This situational logic applies to the Early Afrikaner Nationalist / Boer rejection of British colonial education, and to the African Nationalist rejection of the Afrikaner Nationalist education system. In both cases the problem was not a matter of education but a matter of politics. The state lacked legitimacy. Thus, a state system was perceived to be the instrument of one group, meaning that even if it was referred to a 'state' system and controlled by the group in control of the state, it was still a monopoly. The elaborate edifice which was constructed by the apartheid ideologues, bureaucrats and politicians was, and still is, a form of 'private education' in the sense that the control and definition of instruction occurred with the virtual sole concern for the interest of one ethno-political entity, namely Afrikaner Nationalists, who also happen to control the state. Thus, structurally, education in South Africa has never been significantly modified as a result of opposition.

In the period under scrutiny in the study, the only case where systemic arrangements in education were directly affected by competitive opposition was when Afrikaner anti-colonial free-burghers and trekkers could succeed in freeing themselves from the political legal framework set up by the colonial regime. As for assertive agency among black South Africans aimed at socio-political emancipation, the time under scrutiny is characterized by disadvantaged but

underdeveloped (Primary) agency. That means that even if they wanted to respond as competitive agents, it was unlikely to happen owing to the relative lack of resources, organization and even mobilized oppositional consciousness in reaction against the existing educational arrangements.

It could also be that many black people did not respond in resistance or opposition because they may have, owing to ideological manipulation, perceived educational arrangements as adventitious. In attempting an 'objective' analysis of the situation, one could then argue that there were times when relatively few black people may have been in the category of people who experienced themselves as obstructed by the nature of education, even though it effectively served to disadvantage them. In any case, by the 1970s, whatever ideological or social manipulation may have been successful in hiding the underlying contradictions and clashes of interests in the educational situation, black youths responded with unambiguous rejection in response to their frustration at educational provisions not living up to their expectation of acquiring the necessary skills to enter the urban-based economy, which in any case complemented dominant interests instead of the interests of the black community.

ii) Resistance instead of overt opposition

In view of the limited space for direct opposition in colonial society, one would expect resistance in all its manifestations to become an important source of whatever failure that occurs. One must, however, take heed of the arguments formulated earlier in this text, so that one does not take all forms of behaviour that do not complement the objectives of the dominant group as being manifestations of resistance. For instance, the not-playing-along with the game of the dominant group could be the result of the irrelevance of the service provided. In this sense the actor is in a 'neutral' structural position rather than in an obstructed position. This is a rather significant aspect of the study: the theoretical argument is that resistance must be seen in relational terms. As pointed out earlier, resistance theorists tend to leave two things out of their accounts, namely (1) the other side or dominant group and its capacity, and (2) the possibility of failure of resistance. Thus, one would want to evaluate the success of resistance on the one hand, but on the other hand one would want to point out how resistance should rather be seen in the context of the morphogenesis of agency and the transformation of both the dominant and the subordinate groups.

Questions about the role of resistance in the emergence of negotiation politics: Working on the bigger political canvas

for purposes of theoretical clarity, one can, again, briefly consider some of events of the recent past for the purpose of illustration.

The 1970s and 1980s were characterized by the rhetoric of resistance politics. Certainly, this did contribute to the failure of the politics of domination, but it would be too easy to come to the conclusion that it was so successful that it was the only source of failure. The actual reasons for the change of Nationalist Party politics in 1990 from confrontation to negotiation will remain an interesting item of debate for some time to come. Some arguments suggest that Pretoria had no choice but to capitulate at home because it had been defeated militarily in Angola (with particular reference to the battle of Quito Cuanavale) and internationally because of the success of economic sanctions. Other arguments credit De Klerk for his political astuteness in exploiting the weakness in the ANC position resulting from the end of the Cold War. For instance Giliomee (1992: 118) argues that :

Internal resistance and sanctions exerted constant pressure but they failed to achieve the fundamental requirement for a substantial shift in power: a crack in the regime. No significant section of the ruling bloc went outside for support. In making his decision in late 1989 to unban the liberation organizations, de Klerk did not act at the behest of business or religious elites but on the advice of his security establishment who felt that the ANC had been sufficiently weakened to be a containable force.

Giliomee may have something here, but it is not enough, and

too simplistically focuses on the loss of power in the ranks of the opposition. If that was the only factor, the question remains why De Klerk did not go for achieving the fatal defeat of the ANC as his predecessors may have attempted ?

To find an answer to such a question one should look at the transformation of agency that occurred over a longer period of time in both cases. From the ANC point of view, resistance was successful but it was limited. As pointed out by the late Chris Hani, ANC military commander:

to [ultimately] destroy the will of the government to continue with Apartheid would have taken a very, very long time. (Cited in Adam and Moodley, 1993:50)

In view of this realization, and an increasingly exhausted liberation movement, the internal debate in the ANC was moving towards the favouring of negotiations long before 1990. Resistance is not a one-way process; successful or not, it is exhausting because the other side does not give way. In the face of the persistence of the regime, surely the ANC had to rethink its strategies.

On the other hand, the regime became more flexible not only because it suited them to change strategies, but because they were also being transformed in the face of the outcome of their past agency, which was becoming an unbearable burden. Both were weakened and negotiation became an obvious way out of a no-win situation, but equally, both sides also

changed their ideologies and strategies as the effects of their actions became more obvious. The transformation of agency had come full circle when Afrikaner Nationalist leader of the secret Afrikaner Broederbond organization, J.P. de Lange, stated that "the only risk was to not take risks".

Education and resistance during the 1980s: Taking this debate to the educational terrain, one is justified in asking similar critical questions about the effects of the school boycotts of 1982 onwards. In retrospect, it remains a question as to what extent these actions could be described as successful despite the enormity of the impact of the education boycott campaign. Instead, this period in the history of South African education appears to provide good illustrations of the ambiguous relational features of resistance.

As a point of departure, I argue that resistance that does not reap success in the form of modifying the relationships against which it rebels in a relatively short time, could become self-defeating. **Success of resistance should, then, be defined as progressive undermining of the dominant group's capacity to dominate, the accompanying enhancement of the capacity of the oppressed to exert control over their own actions and the prospect of structural transformation of the domination / assertion relationship within such a time**

that the opposing group does not run out of resources / momentum at a faster rate than the dominant group loses its grip. In terms of such a description resistance is explained in terms of the logic of the double morphogenesis.

The events of the 1982-1986 period provide a good illustration of resistance failing in terms of the above criteria. To illustrate the point some elaboration is required. This will be done by using the material contained in the work of Unterhalter and Wolpe (1989).

While the students participated in the struggles against the regime in the community-context, it was only from 1983 that the school boycotts, which had previously served as one among other tactics, began to assume increasing importance, not only as a means of breaking down the existing education structures, but also as a strategy of political action.

In 1983, a school boycott was launched in the Pretoria area to support demands for free text books, properly qualified teachers, the abolition of corporal punishment, the ending of sexual harassment of female students, and official recognition of the democratically elected Student Representative Councils (SRCs). As the boycott movement gathered momentum and spread over the country, demand for democratically elected SRCs was pushed increasingly to the fore and, indeed, the struggle tended to shift from demands

for the radical reform of the existing education system to contestation with the state over control of the schools - as it were, for 'people's power' in education.

In 1984 and 1985 the boycott strategy gained very widespread support - at one point some 650 000 students and hundreds of schools were involved. The Department of Education and Training (DET) responded to the actions of the students by closing many schools. Student activists were harassed, arrested and detained (particularly during the emergency in 1985) and many killed in demonstrations. The major student organization, COSAS, was banned in August 1985. The South African Defence Force occupied numerous black townships and school yards.

By October 1985, schooling had been comprehensively disrupted and nowhere more so than in Soweto. Although the boycott remained the main form of student action, there were moves to re-open schools closed by the DET. There were also opposing strategies at work in relation to examinations, with sections of the students wishing to sit them and others maintaining the boycott.

Be that as it may, the boycott formed around the slogan 'Liberation first, education later' and a more-or-less indefinite boycott became organized. It had clearly succeeded by 1985 as a political strategy in rendering the

schools unworkable and ungovernable.

But this success contradicted the idea of using schools as a site to pursue liberation. By the middle of 1985, the effects on the student movement and the education struggle of the boycott strategy came under scrutiny from outside the student movement. Awareness of a crisis in the conduct of the education struggle began to emerge. The detailed history of events which followed need not detain us here. It is sufficient to note that the concern over the effects of the boycott strategy led to a series of conferences on the education crisis (Mkatshwa, 1985 and Sisulu, 1986). The central issue was the failure of the student organizations to exploit the conditions, brought into existence by the struggles of the students themselves and the mass democratic movement to win specifically educational demands, because of the continued adherence to the boycott. A range of issues were discussed at the conferences, but the major considerations underlying the decisions taken in December 1985 and March 1986 may be analyzed as follows:

(1) In the first place, the breakdown of the schooling system meant that large numbers of secondary school students (the major sector of the schooling population involved in the boycott) were being deprived of further schooling and therefore of even the limited 'skilling' offered by Bantu Education. For many parents this overshadowed any political

gains of the boycott actions. But the collapse of the educational system also had potentially extremely negative consequences for the entire national liberation and trade union movement. A major role in the resurgence of trade union and mass struggles from the early 1970s had been played by a generation of young black people educated to secondary and tertiary level under Bantu Education. The educational deprivation of the present generation of secondary school students threatened to weaken their contribution to the movement, which was becoming increasingly organized and complex in its functioning.

(2) In the second place, while there had undoubtedly been a great increase in the level of mobilization of students and the involvement of an extremely large number in the boycotts, over the previous two years, the boycott of the schools had nonetheless deprived students of a daily meeting place in which discussion and organization could take place. As a consequence, the capacity to organize the students was reduced, and the organizations began to lose coherence and also tended to disintegrate. A direct result of this incoherence was a breakdown in communication between students on a mass level, between students and leadership within organizations, and, at times, among the leadership themselves.

For this reason also there was a breakdown in communication

between the students and communities, resulting at times in a lack of community support for student campaigns and struggles. The community organizations were thus left uncertain as to the situation in the schools and the school boycotts. And with the banning of COSAS, the students found themselves without a means of coordinating strategy. The result of this was the further isolation of the student movement.

(3) In the third place, the tendency to regard the boycott as an end in itself had the effect of obscuring its limitations under changed conditions. Furthermore, however successful in mobilizing support, the boycott could not be sustained indefinitely. Indeed, it was the very success of the boycott in rendering the schools inoperative which posed the question of 'What next?' To this question the student movement apparently had no answer except to continue with the boycott. The continuation of the boycott meant that the student movement and the students could not proceed to establish structures of people's power in the schools itself. Practically, it was only the **demand** for democratic control of the schools through SRCs or parent-teacher-student committees that could be made, and then only from outside the schools themselves.

What is the significance of this episode? The boycott strategy as a form of resistance in the context of the

existing political arrangements, permitted, in reality, only a struggle **against** Bantu Education, and not **for** people's power in education. **Was it successful?** One could probably argue that it was, but not in its own terms - it contributed to the defeat of Bantu Education but it has created outcomes not desired for major sectors of the emerging black society - it has left a legacy of millions of black children who are politically 'over educated' and because of a lack of formal education, again in the position of subordination. In terms of its set objectives the boycott failed, but it certainly contributed to a context in which the dominant agent had to reconsider its strategies and concerns - the sheer depth of the education crisis, as compounded by the events of the 1980s, has already forced even the dominant group to deal with the unintended outcomes of the educational arrangements under apartheid.

Theoretically, the important point that is being made here is that resistance, like any other form of social action, must be seen in relational terms, i.e. the transformation of both the dominant and assertive agents. The success/failure of resistance must be understood in the context of its effects on the power imbalance between the dominant and assertive group. If this relationship is not altered to the advantage of the assertive group, resistance has failed in its own terms. But resistance is as unpredictable as any other form of actions - it produces its own unintended

consequences. In terms of the failure of dominance, resistance does not easily bring overall defeat of the dominant agent in the context of an oppressive monopolistic institutional sphere. Yet, as in the case of the events of the 1980s, it could certainly complicate the environment within which the dominant agent hopes to maintain order.

**iii) Failure deriving from the narrow definition of
education**

A narrow definition of education usually results from monopolistic control whereby other interest groups are excluded from the definitive control over educational operations, being subordinate and dependent on the dominant owning group for educational services. While these groups become vulnerable in the context of education, there is also the implication of an imbalance and **one-sidedness that is built into the structure and nature of the service provided.** Interests represented in the decision-making processes and introduced in the content of the operations reflect a concern with only one sphere of society - that with which the dominant group is associated at a given point. Since the external agent is so narrowly concerned with its own interests, those who are supposed to be the experts - the internal practitioners and professional educators - become impotent in defining education in educational terms or in initiating changes in response to needs articulated out in the society. The result is such a narrow definition of

education that educational matters are often simply devoid of educational processes and the insights of educationists. Education, while never free from political content, here simply becomes a political tool and not a service to society.

A further implication is that educational changes have to be explained with reference to social interaction outside the educational field and among groups who are not employed or engaged in it.

More subtle are the unintended consequences of focusing educational operations on the attainment of a specifically conceptualized goal, whereby a broader spectrum of educational objectives may be ignored or neglected. By putting all its money on one outcome, the dominant group loses control over other possible outcomes and could easily find that the specific project fails because its outcome in another time context has become less desirable than originally expected. To illustrate the point: the original apartheid education project had as its objective the confining of black people to the ranks of the working-class. While this may have served Afrikaner Nationalist interests in the early years of apartheid, when Afrikaners were themselves battling to escape from the working-class and the economy may have needed a big army of manual labourers, it became the source of economic decline and concern to

Afrikaner Nationalists when, by the late 1960s, after gaining from apartheid, they moved out of the working-class and with economic changes taking place and industrial growth accelerating, a higher level of labour became a necessity. By this time the original objectives of Bantu Education were becoming a problem for their further success (see article by Muller, 1991, for the failure of the "manpower" projects of the Nationalist Party Government).

Similarly, when the British promoted missionary education for black people in the 1800s they did it with the objectives of 'border pacification' and 'economic education' in mind. Yet missionary education became a vehicle for the social and political advancement of a new black elite who demanded more education - not for the purpose of serving the colonial masters, but with the ideal of emancipation in mind. Missionary education was not originally supposed to provide the education for the first African Nationalist political elite, but it did (see Marks and Trapido, 1987).

What is being explained here are the implications of the narrow definition of education and, as is illustrated in this study, these specifically defined projects have failed despite the power advantage of those who initiated them. The narrow definition of education leaves uncovered / unserved a spectrum of needs. Even if those needs / interests are not going to be pursued by Corporate Agents, the implications of

the needs of a substantial proportion of a population being ignored could surface in other spheres of society. Besides the unwanted consequences of not providing an education service that could cater for the majority of the population, a narrow definition of education could also have the implication of not reaching the minds of those that the dominant groups seeks to control. As a consequence such categories of the society could play an indirect role in the failure of dominant agency. The so-called **structurally neutral groups** who are unaffected by the specific nature of the education service provided could have such an impact, because they do not become engaged in playing the game according to the rules of the dominant group. For instance, for the children of families engaged in pre-industrial subsistence farming, formal education had no relevance and the non-attendance at schools that were intended to be vehicles for their introduction into the social system of the dominant group reduced the chances of the dominant group achieving the objectives of social control or change.

Finally, even **institutional groups that derive adventitious benefits** from the service provided but who are not in managerial control of education may become a source of failure because of the inconsistencies between what is being offered and what they want for their own purposes. Such an underlying clash may go undetected while groups utilize the education service offered, but they may gradually become

aware of the cost they have to pay for not being in control of the content of education. In this study there are a number of such instances, for instance, the missionaries were given the opportunity to reach the population through education but their interests clashed with the those of the colonial regime. While they were generally not inclined to bite the hand that fed them (the authorities paid for the service), in the long run the incongruities between missionary and colonial interests contributed to effects and outcomes which contradicted the original objectives of dominant agents. While the missionaries played along with the colonial authorities, they eventually contributed to anti-colonial sentiments. People like Van Der Kemp and Philip became vehement opponents of the colonial authorities once they acquired insight into the underlying clash of interests and the brutalities which accompanied the colonial project. This is then another example of the effects of a narrowly defined education service: when Black youths entered missionaries' schools the colonial authorities intended that they thereby be politically and economically moulded to serve the Empire and its interests. Yet, an unintended effect of colonial agency in general, and specifically missionary education, is that it served to provide the educational base for emergent indigenous Nationalistic sentiments.

iv) **The strategic implications of the relative absence of reciprocal interaction / interactive processes** by which the dominant can remain in contact with 'the other', even if it is only to make the necessary strategic moves to spot the weaknesses of growing opposition. The dominant group becomes the victim of its own oppression and refusal to permit / engage in a 'positive feedback' cycle. This occurs even in the most repressive situations. Thus opposition could go undetected and misinterpreted, and changes in relations can come unexpectedly for the dominant group - changes that could have fatal consequences insofar as the relational capacity of the dominant group.

What is being articulated above is the **morphogenesis and failure even in severely repressive situations**. As already suggested, dominance and the conditions facilitating its maintenance do not persist indefinitely. Even in the most tightly controlled contexts there are underlying processes which work against the successful implementation of the dominant ideas and arrangements. In essence, the argument is that even if the dominant group refuses to institute formal means of reciprocal interaction, it still occupies only one side in relational complex and if the other, however they are constrained by the denial of their interests, does not play according to the rules as imposed by the dominant, the dominant groups cannot be sure of success. However hard a dominant group works to maintain structural relations so

that they favour their operations, structural change takes place all the time and the nature of agents changes all the time. Thus, a dominant group and all its members are required to play according to rules which are consistent with the collective interests. This hardly ever happens. Sometimes congruency could be absent simply because of the incompetence of particular participants, a lack of will or the lack of social and ideological consensus within a particular group.

v) The unintended consequences deriving from the complexities of structure/culture and agency interaction

This study is based on the assumption of ontological complexity with which the attention is pointed to the sheer unpredictability / indeterminacy of the outcomes of interaction owing to the complex interplay between system and agency. Since the whole study is an affirmation of these assumptions, I will refrain from repeating what has already been stated or stating here what will later be repeated.

5.4 Morphogenesis of Ideologies and the Failure of Dominant Agency

Finally, and as a last component in the conceptual framework required to explain the failure of agency, the focus shifts again to the ideological level. The basic argument developed here is that, even though dominant agents may be

significantly advantaged by the structural features of a typically morphostatic scenario like the colonial society, they may still need to engage in extensive social and ideational labour in order to prevent the underlying contradictions from surfacing and threatening the social order. The success of these labours is dependent on many things, not least of which is strategic finesse, something which is often lacking in the repertoire of an oppressive agent. Thus, it is also obvious that a dominant group can actually fail in achieving or maintaining an impression of ideational order, or convincing people with its ideological rhetoric. At the same time, as this study illustrates, dominant agents do often remain in socio-political ascendance even though they have failed on the level of ideas and ideologies.

In explaining the dynamics of the relationship between ideology and agency and how it is related to the failure of agency, one must first return to Archer's work on culture and agency as discussed in section 4.3. Following that, one should explore her views on the conditions leading to the break-up of a homogeneous Cultural System. In this regard Archer (1988) describes the effects of the failure of syncretism and containment, unintended outcomes of systematization of ideas and the emergence of competitive contradictions. These items are all useful in explaining the failure of agency as described above, i.e. as failed

efforts to repress pluralism by a dominant group.

This section will explore reasons for failure which are derivations from the entangledness and complexities of the culture-agency relationship. The emphasis is on the level of ideas, and, as stated above, failure of an idea (in the sense that other people do not accept it) does not necessarily lead to the failure of the agent to remain in control of a situation. Failure here refers to :

- i the failure of agents owing to the unsuccessful ideational labour of the dominant group,
- ii failure as deriving from the inadequacy of the dominant group's efforts to contain oppositional groups from exploiting features of the existing complex of ideas and ideologies,
- iii failure deriving from the unsuccessful efforts of the dominant group to unify and systematize the ideas held within the framework of the dominant ideology,
- iv failure of agency which derives from the emergence of competitive alternatives to the dominant ideology, and
- v failure that derives from the loss of dominance of an idea in the emerging complexity of plurality of ideas, even if the ideas are complementary to the dominant ideology.

Each of these will be discussed briefly.

i) **Failure of agency deriving from the failure of the ideational labour of the dominant group**

Archer (1988) makes a distinction between containment strategies which are power strategies, and corrective strategies which refer to action taken on the ideational level. The former is relatively easy to achieve, depending on the amount of social power possessed by the dominant relative to others. But ideational correction is not as easy, since it depends on changing the ideas that people hold.

Illustrating, once again, the value of analytical differentiation, the argument presented here is based on the separation between the structural and the ideological for the purposes of investigating the success or failure of dominant agency in an oppressive environment . It is proposed that under certain circumstances - particularly those characterized by extremes in power - one should look for failure not only in terms of structural transformation but in terms of the failure of dominant groups to achieve specifically conceptualized institutional projects.

Going further than Archer's earlier arguments that one should distinguish between the social and the institutional, the distinction here is between success/failure in terms of

specific institutional projects and overall institutional control.

In such situations, structural and institutional relations may remain more or less the same over a relatively long period of time, and assertive agency may have only marginal effects on the general patterns of social life. Yet, even in such a situation, oppositional agency can be highly conscientized and strategically capable of contributing to the failure of the experiments, projects and efforts of the dominant group to achieve specifically conceptualized institutional projects which require their co-operative input. Since they may see through the schemes and ideas of the dominant group and could secretly have in their minds the notion of the desired alternative, the oppressed can effect the failure of specific institutional projects without posing direct opposition (which could be dangerous) by simply resisting or participating with such a lack of commitment or enthusiasm that the project fails to achieve its intended objective.

This argument acquires more potency when one shifts the focus more to the ideational level, where it is possible to observe the specific institutional objectives as articulated by the dominant group. One should follow the life-course of projects of the dominant group with the focus on how they run into the complications deriving from the contradictions

between interests contained in the group. Such sets of ideas eventually encounter the complexities of the Cultural System and Agency or the Socio-Cultural dynamics.

In the current study the words agency and projects are often used interchangeably - projects like the Anglicization and Border-Pacification projects of the British were all relatively well-articulated, reasoned and fully-fledged projects on the idea level; and certainly the actions of these agents reflected the linkage between action and ideas.

In the effort to implement these ideas, one could argue that some degree of creativity is visible in the construction of these ideas - as is evident by the notion of introducing a Department of Education well before it was introduced in Britain. The dominant groups were generally more successful on the social level and less successful on the idea level. Since they had the social power, they could at least get off the ground projects which clashed directly with the interests of substantial numbers of people. They had the power to act even if against the will of others, but they were much less successful on the ideational / ideological / cultural level in the sense that they could not undo the contradictions between their own ideas and those held by the groups subjected to the projects. Neither did they succeed in containing the other to such an extent that oppositional ideas and ideologies did not keep on surfacing in challenge

of the dominant ideology. In essence, as holders of A they could not get the holders of B to abandon B or to accept A, even though B was not being aired in the public debate.

This matter is well illustrated by means of convincing examples available in the South African society. After all, who would argue that the colonial society and the apartheid society are not characterized by obvious contradictions? And who could deny that the dominant was historically capable of maintaining social dominance by applying coercive measures, but that it did not succeed in removing the contradiction contained in the clash of interests between the dominant and the oppressed in both the colonial and the apartheid society? In particular, it could not succeed in getting the oppressed to accept the dominant ideas or not to become aware of the fact that they were the victims of the an oppressor who used ideas that demonified them. I would argue that in a case like South Africa, domination will eventually fail despite its extremity and the determination of the dominant agents to make the dominant ideology stick. The primary source of failure is the very basic contradiction upon which the social order is based, and the secondary (but necessary and equally important) source is that the mass of people in the disadvantaged sections of the society are well aware of the nature of the contradiction. The contradiction conditions a negative inclination and the awareness thereof by the majority of the population has the

effect of a massive demographic weight of negative Primary Agency which is not inclined to play according to the rules contained in the dominant ideology. In general, what is required to bring the dominant agency to a point of, at least, being willing to compromise is for leadership to organize and mobilize the politically conscious populace into ongoing ('rolling') mass action by which the society is made ungovernable. The recent history of South Africa reflects an unfolding of this, rather obvious, scenario.

Even though black South Africans, arguably, never accepted Bantu Education, they made use of the service because there was no other. Using the service did not mean that the dominant group succeeded in its objective of pacifying, segregating and instilling an acceptance of the apartheid society into the minds of black people. As a general argument, it is hard to conceive of a situation where, under colonialism or apartheid, the enslaved and oppressed can actually be unaware of a logical alternative to the existing order. Even while the schools, churches, mass media and public debate reflected a 'normal apartheid society' for many years, many actors worked to develop the counter-ideology. The political education in opposition to apartheid society went on in training camps outside the country and even from Robben Island where Nelson Mandela educated other prisoners enabling them to act as agents of the counter-ideology once they were released. Maverick academics wrote

articles condemning the system. Some were censored but others were too prominent to be silenced in a demonstrably blatant fashion. At the same time the United Nations, the anti-apartheid movement, the foreign press etc. were keeping themselves busy with that which the regime did not want any debate about, but which eventually caught up with them.

ii) The failure of containment strategies and the failure of agency

The creation or maintenance of order in the Cultural System in the context of disorderly Socio-Cultural System depends very much on the success of containment strategies, that is, preventing the contradictions from coming to the social surface. Yet ultimately all containment strategies or strategies to manipulate consensus in the face of underlying social confrontation or clashes of interest, are limited (Archer, 1988: 194). They all merely delay the exposure of contradiction because the contradiction exists, is known and analyzed. This may sound like a philosophical positivistic argument, but the point remains that people need to perceive the contradictions and to take certain actions, even in the form of non-action, in line with the dictates of the dominant ideologies. Even if only a small group of 'controllers' / censors, academics, locked up activists, a few uncontrollable / untouchable maverick individuals ,

outsiders etc. keep on working on the same counter-ideological ideas, the ideas are being kept alive and ready to be used for mobilization purposes.

Containment strategies do not work equally well under all social conditions. Archer (1988) writes about orderly and conflictual socio-cultural levels. A crucial point appears to be that societies like the colonial and apartheid society are initially pervaded by constraining contradictions. What one finds is that dominant groups hold ideologies which are inevitably in contradiction with the ideas of the oppressed people and many others. The oppositional ideas are often under-represented in the social arena because of the combination of two factors : (1) the relatively successful repression of those ideas by the dominant, and (2) the lack of organization and articulation by the opposition. They are successful for a surprisingly long period of time (surprising given the severity of contradiction and underlying social division, but not surprising in view of the power imbalance) for they use coercion / first order power to maintain their ideological supremacy.

As the apartheid ideological history shows, societies like these are characterized by a political culture which is high on power and low on ideological sophistication. Thus ideationally fragile ideologies are often held up by strategically inept politicians who seem to be successful.

This is a very misleading situation. I want to argue that Afrikaner Nationalists are today at a distinct strategic disadvantage because of the strategic naivety which has been fostered by the politics of isolation. The intellectual and strategic sloppiness that comes from the abuse of power in the ideological struggle makes the dominant vulnerable. Even in these societies, the constraining contradictions eventually generate competitive alternatives which very often facilitate changes. It is particularly in these cases that the morphogenetic dynamic is crucial. The 'deeper logic' of morphogenesis works by generating what is the most unexpected: that the potentially fatal opposition or source of plurality emerges from within, even though strategies to prevent it from happening at all, appear to be successful on the social surface. Even in this so-called morphostatic context, the processes of morphogenesis are at work - the point is just that the more controlled a society is, the slower the process. The eventual intensity could, however, also be more dramatic. As we have seen in South Africa over recent years, in this process of emerging ideological pluralism the underlying social conflict comes to the surface and even the good ideas of the dominant group are rejected because they are proposed by the dominant group. Despite its lack of social power, the historically marginalized and oppressed gradually acquire cultural power to the point where the whole society appears to be faced with a simple choice -the choice between holding on to the

past and suffering severe social conflict, or accepting new ideas and categorically renouncing the ideas of the past. As we see now, the cultural power of the historically disenfranchised could grow to the point where ideas are only accepted as good if approved by the historically disenfranchised. Consequently, 'bad ideas' are also accepted because they are legitimated by 'the people'. This appears to be the end of the story but it is unlikely to be. There will always be the newly marginalized who either missed the boat or have no basis on which to abandon the old and adopt the new.

iii) **Failure of agency deriving from the unsuccessful efforts of the dominant group to unify and systematize the ideas held within the framework of the dominant ideology**

Referring to the dynamics within the main body supporting the dominant ideology, systematization is a response to the logic of an ideational situation characterized by ideas complementing the main body of ideas and can be described as

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the strengthening of pre-existing relations among parts, the development of relations among parts previously unrelated, the gradual addition of parts and relations to a system, or some combination of these changes (Archer, 1988: 171-2).

Now, surely this type of ideational labour could have the effect of elaborating an ideology or idea and in the process

securing it in relation to alternatives. But at the same time, systematization also has the effect of defining the boundaries between it and its alternatives in more and more specific terms. This could have the further effect of closing off the ideology and its proponents from complementarities which may have been enriching. These soon become dangerous threats to the increasingly orderly set of ideas contained in the ideology. According to Archer (1988: 177):

Logically the more complex the internal structure becomes, the more difficult it is to assimilate new items without major disruption of the delicately articulated interconnections.

and from Bauman (cited in Archer, 1988: 177) the same idea using an organismic metaphor:

The more oppositions an organism is capable of distinguishing meaningfully, the "richer" becomes its assimilated environment, the more involved the corresponding structure of internal organization; but the less tolerant is the organism of even subtle vacillations of environmental state.

This complicated but very relevant matter offers much to the student of the South African society. As suggested earlier, apartheid as the politics of isolation *par excellence* was successful for a certain period of time as a form of protective insulation, but is in the longer run a self-defeating exercise.

The more apartheid ideologues embroidered on the basic notion of racism, the more they defined all others in enemy terms. Despite all the activity to justify the ideology,

the system of ideas involved became increasingly narrow and constraining. Each further step towards 'refining' the ideology was accompanied by the departure of newly marginalized people and groups who up to that point still survived in the vicinity of the Afrikaner Nationalist Laager.

Thus, systematization eventually becomes the unintended source of failure in the sense that individuals desert groups and splinter off, or in-fighting and divisions emerge. And of course this could eventually lead to the emergence of real opposition on the basis of a counter-ideology. At such a point, the previously orderly Cultural System is now paralleled by disorder of the socio-cultural system. Thus, through counter-actualization, ideational pluralism comes about, which means the **emergence of competitive contradictions**. With some modification this kind of explanation could be applied in diverse contexts in order to explain how the supposed homogeneous cultural and political groupings of South Africa have over time developed into a more diverse pluralism of opposing forces holding diverse points of view. Internally marginalized, and eventually 'ideologically migrating' intellectuals in search of new ideas could be identified in all the cases discussed in this study. In many cases the actions of such individuals or groups had significant effects on the 'projects' under discussion.

To conclude, because of morphogenetic processes, manoeuvres to protect constraining contradictions tend to have the opposite effect in the long run. The efforts to repair constraining contradictions represent a motor generating precisely the opposite, namely competitive contradictions. Groups become wedded to antagonistic causes and intransigently oppose efforts to let corrections stick. Equally, protective restrictions to insulate concomitant complementarities from disruption by internal innovation or external intrusion also had the opposite effect. In the case of the apartheid establishment, it stimulated the emigration of marginal groups who followed up contingent complementarities and ended up repudiating stable cultural reproduction.

**iv) The outcome of the failure of containment and
protective measures - the emergence of competitive
contradictions and the failure of agency**

The arguments explaining the conditioning effect (Archer, 1988: 154-7) of constraining contradiction are rather straightforward. When the cultural system consists of ideologies, ideas, beliefs etc., as held by two groups, which are logically incompatible or inconsistent with one another, and perceived as such, both are constrained. When asserting either, the other is invoked in its opposition (apartheid and anti-apartheid). It means that an idea is

taken into or exists in a hostile interaction situation and strategic action to relieve the strain is required. On the operational effects, Archer (1988: 155) states:

What the constraining contradiction does is to confront those committed to A who also have no option but to live with B as well, with a particular situational logic. According to this logic, given their initial commitment to A, they are driven to engage with something both antithetical but also indispensable to it - which therefore they can neither embrace as it stands nor reject out of hand. They must struggle to extract what is necessary from B, ward off B's counter-attractions or counter-claims and avoid the labyrinth of doubt, to return to A bearing their offering.

v) **Failure deriving from the unintended ideational pluralism**

What has happened to the original context which favoured dominant agency? The original morphostatic context was homogeneous and ideationally uncomplicated. Because of the morphogenetic dynamic described above, it has been transformed into a complex plural environment where the sheer plurality of alternatives available undermines the potential dominance of any single idea or ideology.

In discussing the interaction between dominant and assertive groups in the educational sphere, Archer (1984: 51) points out that an ideology performs three vital functions for an assertive group:

Ideology is a central factor in challenging domination, since the legitimization of educational control must be negated by unmasking the interests served, thus reducing support for the prevailing definition of instruction. Secondly, it is crucial in legitimating assertion itself and is thus related to the consolidation of bargaining power. Finally, it is vital for the specification of the

alternative definition of instruction, the blueprint which will be implemented in the schools if assertive groups are successful.

Of course, pluralism does not easily come about and neither does a competitive type of pluralism where ideological alternatives have more or less equal 'air time'. Still, the point being made here is that the mere existence of alternatives in the minds of people poses a significant, and often not easily detectable, threat to domination.

6. Conclusion

This section of the study was devoted to the labour of developing a framework within which events in the Cape Colony will be explored.

On the basis of the foregoing one can hardly proceed to explain the success or failure of social agents by placing the emphasis on a single variable. In particular, one will have to take note of the overall social conditions, the structural relations existing between collectivities as they were associated with diverse social institutions, also the relationship between people as holders of ideas and, finally, one will have to consider the capacity of agents in terms of their numbers, level of organization and their level of ideological development. But the factor introduced in this study which is responsible for a great degree of indeterminacy, unintended consequences and failure of agency

is the morphogenetically emergent transformation of both contextual and agential features of social interaction. This occurs as an unintended consequence of the mutually-modifying interplay between these facets of social reality.

These insights will now be utilized to explore the failure of educational agency in the Cape Colony.

SECTION B: EDUCATIONAL AGENCY AND FAILURE IN THE CAPE COLONY

1. Introduction: The Link Between Theory and Application

Section B of this study will contain the application of theory developed up to this point to the events in South African education during the periods of Dutch and British rule which stretch from 1652 to 1910. This period could also be described as the 'colonial period' or the 'period under the rule of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC)' and 'the period of British colonial rule'. More specific periodization will be presented at relevant points as part of the introduction to different sections.

The theoretical work done up to this point resulted from, and was carried out in, the process of exploring educational developments in South Africa from the pre-colonial period up to the present time. In terms of the historical material covered, the research goes well beyond the requirements of a study of this nature and it is, therefore, justifiable to place the emphasis only on the colonial period. However, it also means that while the theoretical work reflected a concern with the broader historical canvas, the section that follows will be more specific and focused.

Even with such a demarcation, the study covers a period of

more than 250 years which, realistically speaking, can only be explored in a single study if relatively little activity occurred in the terrain of investigation. In the case under investigation formal education was, indeed, comparatively 'underdeveloped' throughout the period, thereby ensuring relative brevity and manageable proportions for the study. Even so, it does not suggest that there is little to be said about educational relations. The morphogenetic perspective, with its emphasis on the interaction of structure, culture and agency over time, is concerned with the historical development of institutional relations, and in particular with understanding social dynamics at a given point in time, as being both conditioned by events of the past and, in turn, also conditioning later developments. Thus, in this section pre-colonial social and educational arrangements will be explored with the aim of understanding their impact on later periods in history, even though no formal educational arrangements existed at in this time. To be sure, the work reported on in this text has been done not only for the purpose of getting a better understanding of the failure of colonial agency, but (even more) with the aim of developing theoretical tools and an analytical framework for the purposes of exploring contemporary developments in the political sociology of South African education. On the other hand, relative brevity is again assured by the focus being placed on the actions of two agents, namely the Dutch authorities and the British authorities. It does not mean

that only the actions of one major agent in a given time will be investigated, but rather that the theme is formulated in terms of specific 'projects', i.e. the projects of the dominant agents. Projects are never seen in isolation, and the aim is to find out how the relationship between diverse agents affected the outcome of the project of one the agents.

The period covered is not the whole of the so-called colonial period but extends up to approximately 1860. This limit is set on the basis of what is required to illustrate the theoretical arguments. The arguments being developed do not require exploration beyond this point. More important, though, is that beyond this point, new sociological variables come into prominence, requiring further theoretical development.

The structure of presentation: The approach followed here will involve breaking down the analysis of each 'project' into three sections:

- * **Preconditioning**, referring to the structural and ideological 'inheritance' or features that form the context within which agents pursue their 'projects'.
- * **Agency / interaction**, concerning the action and process through which agents attempt to implement 'projects' and thereby elicit the response of others in

the context.

* **Outcome**, which is the result of agency and is explored relative to the 'original' objectives contained in the 'project' in order to evaluate success or failure.

In regard to each project, the relatively autonomous influence of, at least, the following factors will be considered as variables influencing the success or failure of agency:

* **Social structure**, as referring to the overall features of social relations on the societal level.

* **Structure of institutional relations**, as referring to the relations between institutional spheres manifested in the relationships between agents of institutional interests.

* **Ideational relations**, as the relationship between ideas about society and education held by different groups with a stake in education.

* **Features of agents**, as referring to the characteristic nature of agents interested in and affected by education and their relations to one another.

* Additionally, but no less importantly, there is the role of **change** in all the above as a factor in failure. The morphogenetic approach places the study of all the

above factors in relation to one another and, it is, thus, in the interaction between variables that the more interesting sources of change will be found.

The presentation will not be structured strictly according to these components, and in many instances two or more of the four items above will be dealt with simultaneously.

2 Educational Agency and Failure During the Period of DEIC Rule

2.1 Introduction: The Debate About Original Objectives

Accepting the earlier identified limitations of focusing on the statements of agents themselves to identify motives and intentions, the statements by Dutch authorities during the Dutch period will, nevertheless, be accepted as the starting point to understanding their intentions and objectives. This does not mean that it is only the utterances of these people that should be used and that it can simply be accepted as sufficient to establish a picture of their intentions and goals. Equally they should not be dismissed as irrelevant, to theorize in favour of the exclusive emphasis on some hidden mechanism that energizes social dynamics. Similarly, the arguments formulated in Section A, 4.2. sensitized one to the dangers of ignoring institutional relations and over-emphasizing social relations or social structure, but it did not suggest that one should go so far as to ignore the

social context and the non-educational goals of the agents involved as pointers to what they intended by their actions in the educational sphere. In fact, it has been theorized earlier that a particular closeness between other institutional objectives and those of the politically dominant can be expected in colonial society and other similarly repressive societies.

Whichever way one looks at it, identifying the social, political or educational objectives of a particular social grouping is more complicated a task than one would expect. For the purposes of this study it is important to identify so-called 'original' objectives, since it is the action and outcome in terms of these which will be used to gauge success or failure of agency. Not only will the non-achievement of original objectives point to failure, but it will present an interesting point for debate if it is found that a group deviates from, or abandons, the 'original' objective by pursuing new or modified objectives, but nevertheless, remains in social or institutional ascendancy. Clearly, the distinction between 'original' and 'emergent' objectives lies at the heart of the following discussion.

It is a common mistake made by many students of the early Cape to place too much emphasis on the DEIC interests in the Cape and to forget that the Asian markets were what the crusading fortune hunters were after and, in addition, that

the trading companies were essentially business enterprises that were in search of the cheapest trade. A problem encountered by all the trading companies was that trade with India was not always profitable (47% of all ships during 1580-1612 were lost) and many sailors died on the ships during the long journey around Africa (Raven-Hart, 1971).

What could be particularly misleading is the fact that these traders acted as if they were primarily motivated to annihilate the indigenous population instead of trading with them. This style of action should be seen in the context of, firstly, the Eurocentric arrogance and mentality, and secondly, the probable personal make-up of the typical participant in these dangerous voyages. It is not difficult to find evidence in the writings of these people that they were, in the first place, ruthless adventurers who were very likely motivated by strong egoistic drives to conquer the 'unknown'.

For the purposes of this study, the debate about objectives is not so much one about the exact nature of 'original' objectives as the transformation of those objectives. The crucial point is that, regardless of original objectives, they acted as if they had only long-term and comprehensive objectives. Ironically, the reactions of the indigenous peoples to these aggressive actions had the effect of fulfilling these unintended aims in the form that the

interaction between locals and invaders took on (more on this point further on).

For the moment, it needs to be noted that the question about the 'original' objectives of the DEIC is one on which there is considerable disagreement among different authors. Customarily, one of two positions is taken: the first one places stress on the short-term orientated, mainly economic, objectives of the Company, and the second claims that such a view is naive and that the Europeans came to Africa with the aim of taking permanent possession of African territories. In support of the latter thesis, Mungazi (1989: 20), among others, argue that ...

there is no question that the Dutch East India Company was thinking of a permanent settlement at the Cape and that the notion of a temporary occupation has no basis.

Mungazi uses as evidence the elaborate nature of the structure (The Fort) set up by the Company and refers to the fact that the Company officials minted a commemorative medal with the telling words *In altera saeculera* (I go on to the next century) when they celebrated the centenary of the DEIC in 1702. However, the date of this event confirms the present argument about long-term objectives being emergent rather than original ones. This declaration of long-term intentions was made only fifty years after the establishment of the settlement. Instead of seeing this statement as a definitive statement of an 'original objective' it is more

correct to see it as a 'modified' or 'emergent' objective that resulted from the unintended consequences of the interaction over the prior half century. Even the Fort that the Dutch originally built was not at all impressive and indicative of long-term interests. It had to be rebuilt to suit changed needs and objectives.

The Dutch did not intend to set up a permanent settlement but, because of their immediate needs and over-assertive Eurocentric mentality, they were predisposed to act like invaders. Thereby they elicited such a degree of resistance that they, in turn, were compelled to respond with even greater assertiveness. Eventually, the Dutch had little other choice but to declare their presence as permanent. Insensitive as they were to the local needs, they were inclined to dispossess instead of exchange and oppress instead of negotiate. Assuming their social dominance to be the 'natural state of affairs' they presumably did not think in terms of sharing or co-operating but simply took what they desired and imposed their will. The Dutch were, in this situation at least, incapable of the reciprocal action of a 'visitor' or a temporary 'guest'. More important for this study is that this feature of the dominant agent played an important role in their transformation from an agent concerned with temporary objectives to an agent who had to live with the long-term implications of its oppressive actions.

Thus, the point is that the original objectives were to set up a temporary basis because it had obvious financial and other economic benefits. The idea was to set up a settlement that could be maintained with the aim of making the running of the Cape to India route economically more viable. The definitive document setting out these objectives is the '*Artikelbrief*' - the contract on which all servants of the Company, including the Commander of the Cape refreshment post Jan Van Riebeeck, had to take an oath. In the list of instructions for Van Riebeeck it was explicitly stipulated that no-one had the right to trouble the indigenous people or seize their possessions. He was to build a fort capable of housing 80 men, to plant a garden, make pastures and keep on good terms with the natives for the sake of the cattle trade. They had to supply the visiting ships with fresh water, fruit and meet.

The Dutch had no obvious intention to 'take possession' or to found a colony that would exclude other nations from using the Cape as a base. The instruction to Van Riebeeck about his supposed approach to other groups stated clearly that:

If other nations want to settle at the southern point of Africa, he has to live in peace with them. He just has to demarcate the area in which the Dutch have settled and have a map drawn of the area (cited in Debroey, 1989: 7).

Despite these rather limited intentions, the actions that followed were not congruent, and the emergent objectives were orientated to long-term, similar to those of 'colonists'. One can detect a clear transformation of interests as confirmed in the statement referred to by Mungazi.

Right from the start, though, the actions of the Dutch authorities reflected significant incongruencies. When reading about the 'value system' of the Dutch that supposedly affected their social actions, one finds a particularly apparent contradiction between their actions and the regularly articulated Calvinistic value placed on moral order. When acting in an *official capacity*, Company officials typically used the language consistent with the supposed basic values but then, on the other hand, there is ample evidence of action, mostly outside the parameters of their instructions from abroad, which severely contradicted these religious values. This was particularly visible in their attitude towards the local people. These actions displayed a heavy dose of Eurocentric arrogance, social anthropological naivety, and an accompanying desire to dominate and control the lives of the indigenous people. At the least, one can observe a tendency among the foreigners to seek security by dominating and repressing those who posed potential threat.

The observations referred to above are well manifested in the attitude and approach adopted by the Dutch officials to matters educational. They were clearly not particularly concerned about offering formal education because it meant long-term investment for an essentially short-term orientated regime. Nevertheless, whatever they introduced in the form of formal education was, arguably, aimed at three general objectives, namely (1) the inculcating of locals into the cultural realm of the dominant group, (2) the imposition of the political-administrative authority of the Company and (3) the social integration of the dominant group. While it cannot be categorically stated that their education was without any 'educational objectives', it is hard to come to any conclusion other than that educational matters were seen as secondary to the social, economic and cultural objectives of the Dutch regime.

To establish whether these objectives were achieved and if they were, to what extent, and if not, why not, I will now proceed to investigate the developments prior to the introduction of the Dutch educational ideas. This could shed light on the role of the local people in later interaction, and also, on the origin of their ideas and approach to society and education, as well as the pre-colonial social and educational conditions that existed in Southern Africa prior to the arrival of the Dutch. The discussion starts with the former i.e. the social and educational pre-

conditioning effects of the pre-colonial circumstances in Southern Africa.

2.2 Pre-conditioning of Interaction

This section begins with a brief identification of the groups that inhabited Southern Africa before and on the arrival of the Europeans, followed by a brief exposition of the importance of giving consideration to pre-colonial circumstances, before looking at what happened in the Dutch period. Finally, consideration will be given to the possible effects that the pre-colonial social and educational relations could have exerted during the period of DEIC occupation of the Cape.

2.2.1 Pre-Colonial Society and Education

The early inhabitants: The popular myth that Southern Africa was a territory uninhabited by humans before the arrival of the Europeans is understandable only within a cultural terrain pervaded by the apartheid ideology. This myth has been used as an aid to justifying white supremacy. Not only did the twentieth century popular psyche of Afrikaner Nationalism foster this untruth, but mainstream historians contributed to it by presenting their different versions of history with the common absence of the acknowledgement of a pre-colonial history. Today, though, it is widely accepted that Southern Africa may well have been the 'cradle of all humankind' and that Southern Africa was inhabited for

thousands of years by people of different cultures before the arrival of the Europeans (see, for instance Mostert, 1992: 24-6 and Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 4).

The inhabitants of the later Western Cape at the time of the arrival of the Europeans were the San (referred to as the Bushman or Bosjesman by the Dutch) and the Khoi (named Hottentots by the Dutch to refer to their 'stuttering' way of speech). Anthropologists today refer collectively to these groups as the Khoisan, confirming research that they are not actually two clearly distinct groups but rather that the San are the ancestor of the Khoi (Elphick and Giliomee, 1989:4). The San are regarded as the oldest of the human community of which there are still living members. They are also the ancestors of the Khoi and typical hunter-gatherers. Both are yellow or olive-skinned, the San small, almost dwarflike, and the Khoi slightly bigger and making their living by herding cattle and sheep.

Further into the interior of the country lived a number of more dark-skinned groups or chiefdoms who were mixed farmers - the Zulus, Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana etc.. Because of their common origin, their languages are quite similar. Again the popular myth wants to have it that these groups have moved downwards from central Africa only in recent times, but archaeological findings point to the contrary (see Thompson, 1990: 7). Social differences from Khoisan are numerous but

in general these communities were bigger and more structured. These peoples are collectively referred to as blacks although the word black has come to be used in much wider terms since the 1970s -to include so-called coloureds and Asians. In this study only one of these groups will be encountered and that is the Xhosa people who were based in an area today referred to as the Eastern Cape.

Reasons for inclusion of this section on pre-colonial society: There are at least three good reasons for including this section. Firstly, despite its neglect, pre-colonial history is significant in its own right. Much work needs to be done to restore a severe imbalance in writing and research into the history of South Africa. The European bias starts with ignorance of pre-colonial history. South African-born Yale historian Leonard Thompson (1990: 6-7) reminds us that by the beginning of the Christian era, human communities had lived in Southern Africa for thousands of years and the pre-colonial history of Southern Africa is significant since it provides examples of the constraints and possibilities, achievements and setbacks of pre-industrial and preliterate communities as they established their niches in a variety of environments. Current knowledge is inadequate because of ideologically inspired bias, difficulty of access and different forms of neglect. The typical 'white'/ European view of the past is characterized by an over-homogenized view of the people of

this time. It tends to ignore the varied ways of life as they differed from ecological and geographical region to region. In these different areas different languages were spoken, lifestyles varied, and social organization and structures varied. And it was not static but changed significantly over time. Contrary to popular political myths, these groupings were not closed entities but relatively open and flexible in terms of internal and external relations (See Boonzaaier and Sharp, 1988).

Secondly, with all the variety and complexities appreciated, there is still value in searching for common features among pre-colonial communities in order to form a general notion of the contrasts and complementarities between the colonial society and the pre-colonial society which fell victim to its impact. Thus, what is required here is some kind of idealtypical portrait of the pre-colonial social form of life and educational practices as an alternative to colonial and apartheid societies.

Finally, it is important to include this section for the purposes of understanding it as an element in the morphogenetic cycle. It should be utilized to explain some of the forces which pre-conditioned the action and interaction of later agents. The tendency to ignore early history and its impact on the present is not confined to 'establishment' work. It is interesting and significant that

many Marxist studies of South Africa contributed to the recent-mindedness of South African history by starting only with the history of the contemporary at the time of the onset of industrialization - the 1860s (See Anthony Marx, 1992, as a very recent example).

As Thompson (1990: 2) points out, pre-colonial history provides essential links in explaining what followed in the historical period after the arrival of the Europeans:

Indigenous Southern Africans were not a tabula rasa for white invaders or capitalists to civilize and to victimize. Over many centuries they have been developing social forms and cultural traditions that colonialism and apartheid have assaulted, abused, and modified but never simply eradicated. One can hardly understand how Africans have endured the fragmentation of their family life by migrant labour unless one has a knowledge of their customary social values and networks. Nor can one fathom the vigors of black resistance to the apartheid state without knowledge of pre-colonial African ideas about the social and economic obligations of rulers and the rights of subjects, and the basis of political legitimacy.

It goes without saying that the reconstruction of pre-colonial history is problematic because of the absence of written records. However, the problem must not be overstated and is often a mere factor of annoyance for contemporary scientists with their preference for written documentary records. Nonetheless, our access to these times is limited and the best that we can do in unravelling this history is to express approximations, probabilities, and informed conjectures derived from the available archaeological, physical, anthropological and linguistic

evidence.

Useful insights can be gained from the social anthropological work done by contemporary researchers, like for instance the group from the University of Harvard (Lee and Devore, 1976) in studying people whose name is written as !Kung and who live today near the border between north-western Namibia and Botswana. These studies are useful because they give us an insight into communities who still practise a hunting-gathering way of life but, while being illustrative, they certainly do not represent the range of lifestyles of the many early peoples who lived in many different types of regions across the subcontinent. In addition, even though change may occur at a different pace, these communities have also changed - for instance it is well-known that the artistic expressions (rock paintings) for which the San became famous ceased sometime in the previous century, since there is no evidence of this cultural expression occurring later than the 1860s (Mostert, 1992:27).

Without falling into the traps of over-generalizing and nostalgic glorification of pre-modern forms of life, one should proceed to use the available research for the purposes at hand. While shedding more light on the reasons for relevance pointed to earlier, the following section will include samplings from research by contemporary researchers

on the lifestyle and 'educational' arrangements particularly of the Khoisan - the people encountered by the Europeans when they arrived at the Cape. At the same time it could also illustrate the variety internal to and among these societies, some unexpected findings and also possible commonalities with regard to education. The specific aim is to focus on the social structure, institutional arrangements and the nature of interaction, internally and between groups. This will be done keeping in mind the pre-conditioning effects of these features.

**Features of Pre-Colonial Southern African Communities
Relevant to Interaction with the European Authorities:**

I have identified a number of features of pre-colonial Southern African society which could serve as guidelines for understanding the nature of interaction that was to follow in the wake of the first European settlement at the Cape. It must again be noted that such descriptions should only be seen in terms of their utility for the following application of theory and not as independent descriptions of these forms of life. The following features are relevant in terms of the later relationships with the Europeans:

- i Self-sustaining way of life**
- ii Internal openness and wholeness of social and institutional structure**
- iii Institutional arrangements characterized by completeness, relevance and institutional integration**

v Self-limiting interaction

These will now be discussed individually:

i) Self-sustaining way of life of 'pre-modern' societies:

It is, indeed, with a particular degree of caution that one describes pre-modern societies and communities as self-sustaining. The idea is not to idealize these forms of life but to work towards a useful idealtypical description of the conditions in which learning occurred. This will then be contrasted with the formal education of the colonial period. Thus, I recognize all the warnings about describing these communities as self-sustaining and consequently isolated and closed-off tribes, thereby justifying the apartheid mindset (See for instance Skalnik in Sharpe et al, 1988). This aspect of the pre-modern forms of life must be pointed out, since it is frequently assumed that the European entry into these societies saved them from a pathetic backward existence and that they required assistance and guidance and that the Europeans had a duty to 'uplift' these 'primitive peoples'. Instead, research appears to call on us to become more aware of how destructive the European intervention was in crushing cultures which were well able to live in relatively self-sustaining equilibrium with their natural and social environment and to satisfy their own needs. Studies of the !Kung and other pre-modern societies like the Australian aborigines and American Indians, illustrate that their way of life involves much less work per capita than

our modern 'civilized' existence. Anthropologist Marshall Shalins even contends that they lived in "pristine affluence". He says:

They lived in a kind of material plenty because they adapted the tools of their living to the materials which lay in abundance around them and which were free for anyone to take (wood, reeds, bone for weapons and implements, fiber for cordage, grass for shelters), or to materials which were at least sufficient for the needs of the population (cited in Thompson, 1990: 9).

He argues that their way of life was defined by an inherent philosophy - their mobility, arising from their need to leave a campsite when they had depleted the plants and the game in its area, made them adopt a philosophy of limited wants. Theoretically, such a philosophy facilitates less antagonistic and competitive relations with other members of a group and with other groups.

While one should not concentrate too much on groups like the !Kung - because they live in the vicinity of the Okavango Swamps which must be one of the most fertile and naturally rich areas in the world - the point is, nevertheless, that even the supposedly most 'primitive' of the people encountered by the Europeans could, according to the available evidence, look after themselves. They were not incompetent, 'wild' people in need of the intervention of Western man(!) Inskeep (1978: 114-5) comes to the rather dramatic conclusion:

We find evidence of sophisticated and successful populations employing with confidence a wide range of

skills to support themselves in their chosen or inherited territories. For some there may have been hard times when food was short, but rarely would it fail completely. For others life came close to ideal in terms of security. With a million and a half years of experience behind him, man had reached the highest points of success in the evolution of the hunting-gathering way of life in Southern Africa.

In similar vein, Claude Levi Strauss (1967: 46), speaking in general terms in 1960 about 'so-called primitive societies' such as the San, said:

... they have specialized in ways different from those we have chosen The way in which they exploit the environment guarantees both a modest standard of living and the conservation of natural resources. Their marriage rules, though varied, reveal to the eye of the demographer a common function, namely to set the fertility rate very low and to keep it constant. Finally, a political life based on consent, and admitting no decisions other than those unanimously arrived at ...

Observing the more recent debates about the lifestyle and relations with others of the San people, one finds no reason to doubt views about the destructive effect that the Europeans had on the early Southern African social landscape. The implications of the more extensive of these research projects, those of the Harvard research group (Lee and DeVore, 1976), are rather dramatic: if this state of existence could be described as a point of evolutionary maturity where humans have succeeded in achieving a harmonious relationship between themselves and nature, the introduction of modern Western culture could be described as a negative turn in the curve, instead of a potentially positive and modernizing intervention which went wrong because of a deviance from the project of the modern. It could clearly place the 'modern intervention' under

suspicion of having not only under-appreciated but crushed sophisticated forms of life.

**ii) Internal openness and wholeness of social and
institutional structure**

Contrary to popular notions about the supposed closedness of so-called tribal societies, the communities that inhabited pre-European Southern Africa were characterized by their structural fluidity and openness, the relative absence of social stratification, interaction reflecting a high degree of feedback and reciprocity, closeness between needs and institutions or practices, weakly developed politics and regular but rarely fatal quarrels and wars between groups (self-limiting if you like) (Debroey, 1989: 87-8; Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 4; Mostert, 1992: 27).

The populations of the chiefdoms were not isolated and closed-off entities. Besides members of a ruling lineage, they included people of different descent groups, and frequently incorporated aliens - people who had quarrelled with their original chiefs or had left drought-stricken areas. These communities even incorporated individuals from the aboriginal hunting communities and, during and after the sixteenth century, even accommodated individuals from European shipwrecks. The Western concept of tribalism, which is usually taken to refer to closed populations reproducing fixed cultural characteristics, is not

applicable to African farmers (Thompson, 1990: 25). Concerning the internal interaction - as an indication of openness and relations between decision-making and popular needs - one could be tempted to simply apply a Weberian notion of traditional authority. However, this could lead to the simplistic assumption that the legitimacy of traditional chiefs was automatically accepted and uncontested. Writing about the powers of the Xhosa chief, Mostert (1992: 200) provides interesting material to illustrate the checks on the power of chiefs. He points out that a chief spent much of his time in the open-air meeting place (lapa) near his personal hut. There, in cooperation with his counsellors - who were drawn from the heads of homesteads - he regulated the affairs of his people, listening to complaints, settling disputes, and receiving visitors (confirmed in the biography of Moshoeshoe as cited in Thompson, 1990: 25). A chief's powers were limited by necessity as well as by custom. He had no standing army, no police force, no jail. He relied on the cooperation of his counsellors, many of whom were his own initiation-mates. He also needed the respect of his people. If a chief required public support for some enterprise or had important information to communicate, he would convene a meeting of his male subjects. At such a meeting, the men had considerable freedom of speech - they could, and often did, make pointed criticisms of the chief or a counsellor. In the last resort, alienated subjects would vote with their feet - leaving their chiefdom and

joining another, where they were nearly always welcome, because people were the most important gauge of the power and prestige of a chiefdom. There was always a possibility that an aggrieved kinsman might build up a following and split the polity.

It would be a naive mistake to assume that the societies referred to here had no internal clashes of interests and ideas. The considerable social variety in limited social space created the potential for conflicts between individual personalities and other levels of society. With the emphasis here on structural relations between institutional spheres as sources of contradictions and conflicts, the question is one about the type of structural features which existed to order institutional relations, i.e. to resolve grievance and opposition among people in institutional terms.

Utilizing the earlier description of the social features of these societies, the argument that follows is that a relatively high degree of institutional integration (i.e. the closeness of social needs to institutional features and the complementarity of institutional features) resulting from flexible social stratification, open polity, self-limiting, and ongoing reciprocal problem-solving interaction etc. could have had the effect of reducing severe social conflict and ensuring flexible adaptation of institutional

practices to existing and changing social needs. The typical legitimacy problem of modern mass society does not arise so acutely, since authority is based on a combination of traditional and 'communicative rationality'. Thus structural complementarity derives from self-limiting interaction, and again conditions reciprocal interaction. Of course, this is not stated in categorical terms but rather as a matter of degree relative to 'modern society'.

iii) Institutional arrangements characterized by

completeness, relevance and institutional integration

Of particular relevance to this study is the relative closeness between institutional arrangements and the needs of the people and the social unit. This was particularly true in the case of religious and 'educational' practices (See Mungazi, 1989: 55). Geoffrey Kapenzi (1978: 9) suggests that like Christianity, which is based on logical theological concepts that cannot be separated from Western culture, the nature and role of indigenous religion cannot be understood in isolation from its other aspects of social life and culture. Yet, he is of the opinion that, unlike Christianity, African traditional religious practices embraced the totality of human life. The same applied in the case of other institutional spheres: not only did the nature of education differ vastly in content from the type of education to be introduced by the Europeans, but it was also different in terms of the structural relationship between

education and other spheres of life. The idea of formal education was foreign - if by formal education is meant a separation between education and everyday life.

The closest that the pre-colonial society came to the separation of education from everyday activity was in the initiation ritual, which was more a 'crash course in manhood' than anything else. This occurred, and still does, at or soon after reaching puberty. Boys are segregated from the rest of society for as long as six months and prepared for adult life. The chief would convene an initiation school when his sons had reached the appropriate age. The initiation process included circumcision, various physical tests, and instruction in the customs and traditions of the chiefdoms, under rigorous discipline. When it was over, the boys were regarded as 'men'. This was a dramatic episode in the life of the chiefdom, through which the hierarchical authority of the chief and adherence to customary beliefs was enhanced (Thompson, 1990: 24).

For the rest, education occurred in the course of everyday activities and because it acquired a utilitarian value, learning provided an incentive and motivation to the learners because they and the other members of their community knew rather well what they were being prepared to do. Placide Temples (in Mungazi, 1989: 51), a Belgian missionary to twentieth century Southern Africa, suggests

that African educational processes covered all the aspects of their lives - religion, commerce, agriculture, weather, medicine, and even the structure of the universe and their place in it. Africans used their education for a complete comprehension of the important elements of their culture in order to understand their world. Kwanisi Wiredu (1980) adds that the completeness of the process in traditional culture reflected the completeness of life itself. As Wiredu sees it, this completeness was synonymous with a working knowledge of the world, however limited their experience of it might have been.

These findings are confirmed by researchers who worked among communities across Africa. For instance, Colin Turnbull (1960:26), after studying the Mbuti of central Zaire, concluded that the all-embracing completeness of the Mbuti learning process manifested itself in the desire to sustain the completeness of society and maintain the integrity of their culture. Michael Gelfand (1965: 70), after studying the Bathonga of the Zambezi valley, concluded that the learning process was especially directed at fitting the learner into a cultural framework that made it possible to promote other aspects of society, such as socio-economic development, medicine, agriculture, law, communication and religion (Mungazi, 1989: 53).

iv) **Self-limiting agents and interaction:** From the above it could be inferred that internal cultural differentiation and clashes of interests, while not absent, must have been relatively minor in 'traditional societies'. It is important to emphasize again the relativity here - since it is not suggested that they were devoid of internal conflict, harmoniously integrated and homogeneous and that no change took place in these societies. Yet these societies could not be described as being plural in the structural and cultural sense of the word - they are not typically thought of as consisting of diverse agents in pursuit of different objectives, competing for control over the educational terrain. Rather, educational practice, being ingrained in everyday social activity, did not lend itself to intervention and invasion / occupation / ownership of the educational sphere as a separate educational terrain.

More debate is possible on this point because one could imagine individuals and their followers 'using' children to promote their ideas and interests and bringing about changes etc.. Yet, on the other hand, the content of learning did not facilitate many internal contradictions and conflicts.

It may seem nostalgic trite to the European reader and it could be hard to believe in view of recent history, but there is considerable evidence of the way in which respect for others, social order and the well-being of the

collective is incorporated and transmitted as specific values in the many African cultures. Mungazi (1989:53) says that

learning to show respect of elders, saying prayers before a journey, giving children a bath, or feeding them, fetching water from the village well, celebrating the harvest, cleaning the house, digging the ground, preparing a meal, all entailed the observance of religious rites that had to be learned carefully. In similar manner, learning human qualities, such as honesty, integrity, truthfulness, and faithfulness, was regarded as a form of religion that had to be learned and could not be taken for granted.

The point to make for the purposes of this study is not so much the specifics of these sentiments and values, as the general effect of people acting on the individual and collective level in a self-limiting, as against an over-assertive, fashion, with the effect that social interaction, one could expect, reflected more reciprocity and exchange than one-sided self-interestedness and, consequently, less negative and obstructive reaction, which is so often the reason for the failure of agency in 'modern society'. Mostert (1992: 195-7) provides good illustrations of the hospitable attitudes of the Xhosas towards outsiders and their own people. Traditionally, Xhosas are generally seen by Europeans as an aggressive and warlike people. Mostert reminds us of the effect of the value common among the 'bantuspeaking' groups, namely *ubuntu* or humanness. *Ubuntu* underlined the entire basis of the intricate Xhosa code of social laws. He quotes John Henderson Soga as saying that ..

the primary object of Xhosa law is to preserve tribal equilibrium. The law therefore guides the

individual towards keeping the tribe from disintegration Any punishment administered for disturbing the balance of tribal life is of a constructive or corrective character; to restore what has been lost in stability by action of any individuals or individual this idea is ingrained in the fibre of the people. The ethical question scarcely counts, restoration is the principal thing (p. 197).

Since it is more pertinent to the future relations of indigenous people to the Europeans, I will conclude this section with a sample of items regarding the nature of external relations and interaction between groups, looking in particular at the relations between the Khoisan and other groups. It is mainly the work of Elphick and Giliomee (1989) that served as the basis for this section. The aim is to point out the self-limiting nature of interaction and its effects on later relations, the emergence of interests common to those of the Europeans that would lead to conflict, and the symbiotic, yet stratified, relations that existed between different groups that were not observed by the intervention of the Europeans, which undermined existing relations.

It is significant that the Khoisan were relegated to a lower social status not only in the colonial period, but also in the pre-colonial. Yet there are significant differences in terms of their experience of the two periods and in terms of their relations with both other indigenous groups and the colonists. In essence, the Khoisan were subservient in their relation with other indigenous groups, but at the same time these relations were symbiotic and accommodative, and

never over-assertive and fatal. On the other hand, relations with the Europeans led to the virtual annihilation of the San and the Khoi, since these relations were devoid of reciprocal exchange and tended to be based on power and little else.

Avoiding the complexities of the debate about the origins of pastoralism, it is relevant to point out that, in general, the incorporation of domestic livestock by the herders resulted in the expansion of private property and the emergence of a stratified society which contained clearer gaps between rich and poor, and led to the formation of larger communities and further complexity in the form of differentiation between primary social and political groups. The introduction of pastoralism (Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 5) involved a fundamental shift in culture and social organization by introducing the notion of wealth accumulation and fostering the acquisitive spirit. This is crucial, since the change which took place here meant that not only were they now likely to clash with local groups, but they were also acquiring some of the same social features and type of social relationships as the Europeans, i.e. differential relations based on ownership of property.

As could be expected, there was less conflict between hunter-gatherers and Europeans. Regarding the relationship between the hunters and the herders, there is evidence that

regular skirmishes occurred because of the hunting of livestock by the hunters and because they were less aware of, and attentive to, territorial matters than the herders. Yet their relations were essentially symbiotic relations, often structured around reciprocal exchange. Traffic of individuals between groups was not uncommon and assimilation was apparently not overly ruled out by structural factors. It is significant that the nature of conflict was limited. Attacks were rarely fatal since they had no weapons made for killing. Hierarchical relations based on the dominance of the herding culture emerged when Europeans started settling in the south-western parts of the region in the seventeenth century.

While the herders gained in many ways from their particular way of life and how it interacted with others, they did not eliminate the hunting and gathering forms of life in their vicinity. They were stronger and healthier because their food supply was more reliable. Milk, being a regular and most nutritious component of the herder's diet, made them taller and stronger than their aboriginal ancestors and contemporaries. Nevertheless, instead of eliminating others, they maintained relations comparable to class relations with other groups (See Thompson, 1990: 15).

In certain areas pastoralism was not possible and the hunting and gathering life-style continued throughout the

colonial period up to today. However these people, like the !Kung of today, were gradually crushed by the Europeans or forced to flee to the Kalahari desert. In general, the impact of colonial relations on the Khoi and the San was devastating. The Khoi were crushed or captured and enslaved. Clearly the capturing of indigenous people, the urbanization process and the migratory labour system affected this relationship severely. One can expect that the introduction of formal education, that is education removed from ongoing everyday life and containing an alien cultural content, could have been perceived as a threat to the community and the authority of the chiefs.

Influence of pre-colonial 'educational' arrangements on later relationships: Appreciating the requirement to consider the variety of lifestyles that existed in different times and areas across the sub-continent, and wanting to avoid making the typical 'white history' mistake of assuming cultural homogeneity in African communities, the author of this study has taken note of the important work done in this regard by people like Inskip (1978), Elphick (1985) etc.. Having explored these sources, it seems acceptable to use the general description of writers like Tsehloane Keto (in Nkomo, 1990; Dickson Mungazi (1989) and Peter Kalaway (1984) for general descriptions about the nature of pre-colonial education in order to set up a contrast to colonial / European education and to consider the reaction of African

people to this new form of education. (See also the earlier discussion on institutional arrangements.)

African societies in Southern Africa had invariably created their own appropriate institutions and processes of socialization and education before the Dutch arrived in 1652. The process of education began with informal learning by young children from family members. They were introduced gradually into the world around them until they reached puberty. At that point a formal intensive learning process lasting up to six months was carried out in the initiation ritual. Lessons in manners, roles, responsibility, values and history accompanied the physical training and the test of endurance and the ability to bear pain. Even when this was abolished, as in the case of the Amazulu, another process of intensive training for military discipline was substituted. There was always a congruent relationship between the training and the lifestyle which the young people encountered when they left their 'school'. The society that controlled these schools also influenced the life chances of the students who graduated from them. These students, whether men or women, were trained to play an active part in community affairs. People from a later time may not agree with the roles assigned to people by this system, but they did not socialize them for alienation (Keto, 1990).

What are the types of social reactions to education of this nature that one can expect? Clearly, the notion of different interest groups / agents pursuing different objectives by means of control over the process of education is inconceivable and, consequently, it is highly unlikely that 'education' at any given point would be controlled by a group whose interests would clash with the 'client' or others affected by the outcome, thereby conditioning oppositional reactions. The field of the political sociology of education thus has limited possibilities under these conditions.

On the other hand, colonial education facilitated negative reaction. Discussing the resistance to Western education by Africans in the nineteenth century, in his book *The Future of Africa*, Donald Frazer (Cited in Mungazi, 1989: 54) concluded in 1911 that the reason why the Africans, in the nineteenth century, rejected Western education was that they compared its limited and fragmented effects to the positive impact of those of their own. Frazer suggested that the inclusiveness and the completeness of the learning process in traditional African culture, its diverse character, its relevance to the essential elements of society, all combined to produce an integrated and meaningful whole. This is what sustained the vitality of the African culture itself. Frazer also concluded that because the Africans were not convinced that Western education would help them retain this

critical aspect of their culture, they did not have much use for it in their lives.

Mungazi (1989: 55) goes on to suggest that the feeling of Africans that they were being coerced into accepting Western education, and the intensity of their antagonistic feelings against colonial rule, provided a basis to build resistance to anything that appeared to have been imposed by the white man. Keto (1990) adds that educational policy and practice in pre-industrial Africa after 1652 should be examined within the historical context of a growing European "political control" of African lives, European appropriation of economic resources from Africans, and the European attempt to establish hegemony over African culture and African values. Education and educational policy in South Africa after 1652 cannot, therefore, be meaningfully discussed outside the context of imperial and colonial relations, that is, without placing them within the context of the expansion of European influence and power in South Africa. To use the words of Peter Kalaway (1984, 8-9):

The colonised peoples of Southern Africa were not simply conquered in a military sense; did not only lose their political independence; were not simply divorced from an independent economic base; were not just drawn into new systems of social and economic life as urban dwellers or wage labourers. Though all of these aspects of the process of colonization have great importance, the key aspect to be noted here is that it also entailed cultural and ideological transformation in which the schools were major agents.

What are the limits and possibilities of one's

interpretation of this material? As argued earlier, one cannot simply assume that people simply succeed in achieving their objectives because they pursue them, and neither should one simply assume bad intentions by those who implemented Western education in the local context. Nevertheless, one should never ignore the imbalance, chauvinism and obvious arrogance inherent in the colonial relationship.

Furthermore, one cannot assume that the education implemented by colonists simply and unproblematically served the needs and interests of the colonists. There were many reasons why the colonists did not simply get things to go their own way. The first two have already been suggested, namely that European education was not appropriate education in pre-industrial society and was rejected as irrelevant, and, secondly, that it was also unlikely to simply succeed in generating a positive attitude towards it, because it was associated with coercion. Kalaway (1984: 10) adds to this what can be regarded as one of the unintended consequences of colonial education, when he writes that

schools were systematically appropriated by colonised peoples and they have played an important historical role as sites of struggle in the colonial context.

Of course, the intention of this study is to point out that neither of these, the dominant who attempts to use education to cement its power base through the outcome of education,

or the dominated whose struggles to regain liberation through education, have simply succeeded.

Finally then, and to conclude this discussion, although one should be cautious not to assume internal homogeneity, there can be little doubt that the educational practices of the African communities in Southern Africa reflected greater harmony between the needs of the people and the nature of the institution; fewer problems with legitimacy; less contradiction and greater penetration of the social character into the educational than would be found in European societies. These features conditioned conflict with the Europeans, and the later failure of Dutch educational efforts must be seen in the light of the contradictions between the European and African social and educational practices and ideas. The local people had little choice but to react negatively, particularly in view of the authoritarian and arrogant way in which the Europeans approached them. Ironically, even in the areas of emergent commonality, i.e. acquired competitiveness and acquisitiveness of the cattle-herding locals, brought them into conflict with the Europeans.

2.2.2 Dutch Society and Education in Relation to the Cape

The objective of this section is to identify the factors related to the background or historical experience of the employees of the DEIC that could have had a conditioning

effect on social and educational interaction after their arrival at the Cape in 1652. This will be done in the form of a brief survey of the following: the position of Dutch society in the global or geo-political context, the reasons for the establishment of the DEIC, its character and interests and educational ideology. Of course, all of this will be done with the aim of appreciating the nature of the agent that entered the local social arena and how those features stood in relation to the features of the local agents, in other words, how it affected interaction.

Dutch society and the DEIC in the geopolitical context:

European association with Southern Africa began with the Portuguese circumnavigation of the Cape at the end of the fifteenth century, but with rare exceptions, they did not come ashore, preferring to frequent the island of St Helena and the east coast havens rather than the 'Cape of Storms'. Although the English, French and the Dutch East India Companies all considered establishing a base at the Cape during the seventeenth century, only the Dutch did so.

Capitalizing on the destruction of the Spanish naval fleet by England's Francis Drake in 1588, the Dutch united four small trading companies to form the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) in 1602 - an event that would shape the course of events in Southern Africa as a region for years to come. The

Company had its operational headquarters in Batavia (now Djakarta) and its board of directors based in the Netherlands, a strategy designed to strengthen and protect Dutch trade and make it competitive against other European companies.

Until the Netherlands government took over its operations, the DEIC exerted a controlling influence over the entire European trade with the Indian subcontinent. The administrative structure and the character of the company were such that it was, indeed, a formidable entity capable of competing against any European rivalries. The shareholders included the powerful and the wealthy, the established and the ambitious, professionals and politicians, seasoned entrepreneurs and risk-takers. All came to international prominence by active involvement in the activities of the DEIC. A man with political business ambition could make his way to the top by seeking to identify himself with the company's objectives. In this regard, the DEIC was different from the operations of the Portuguese, who made no effort to pool their resources to ensure the success of a national endeavor. (Mungazi, 1989: 19)

Gerrit Schutte (in Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 283-315) presents a rather detailed picture of the Company, its

directors (known as the Heren XVII) and the position of the Cape in the DEIC global system. He reminds us that the Cape settlement was only a part of the extensive interests of the Company, and that one should not divorce it from the overall structure to which it belonged. It was a private commercial undertaking, owned by a number of shareholders, managed by an executive council and its main concern was the trade with India.

Abroad, the Company's affairs were managed by the Governor-General and the Council of India and the corps of officials under their command. In theory the India-based authorities were entirely bound by the many and often detailed instructions sent from the Netherlands, but in practice slow communications and the need for expeditious and energetic management gave them considerable autonomy. Until 1732 the Cape was governed by instructions both from the Heren XVII and from Batavia, but after that date, instructions came from the Netherlands alone. A measure of inspection and control over the Cape was also exercised by the passing admirals of the return fleets, acting as commissioners. However, their activities were restricted by the brief duration of their visits and by their need to cooperate with the Cape officials. In addition, special Commissioners-General (e.g. Van Reede, 1685; Nederburgh and Frykenhuis, 1792-93) were occasionally sent to introduce really

significant measures, mostly on specific instructions from the Heren XVII.

As with any commercial firm, the object of the DEIC was to make a profit. Since the shareholders' capital was kept low, a large part of the profits went towards financing investments internally. To enhance its capacity as a competitor in European markets, the Company had to obtain trading goods from colonies cheaply. To this end overheads had to be kept as low as possible, and consequently the directorate of the Company showed scant enthusiasm for expensive settlements. Ownership of overseas territories was not desired and even when, in the eighteenth century, the Company became more and more a *de facto* sovereign of diverse territories, it hesitated to openly acknowledge its sovereignty. (Palmier in Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 285)

Education, beyond that which served the above limited objectives, one could expect, would have been seen as an expensive luxury. But people are not motivated by their material interests alone. As Weber argued, the realm of ideas parallels rather than reflects the structured interests of people but, nevertheless, contributes something of its own in determining the nature of social life. Whatever educational arrangements were to be introduced would then presumably have reflected both the material

interests of the company and other interests and ideas, as for instance the ideas about education *per se* held by the Dutch.

The Dutch ideological inheritance and the educational ideas of the DEIC. Looking at the matter from the point of view of the Dutch society, the first thing that stands out in the literature is the close connection between religious and educational concerns at the time. Devotion to the principles of the reformed religion was, to a great degree, the reason for the long and stubborn opposition to Spanish oppression, and also the welding force in uniting the Netherlands into one single commonwealth. This was done through the joint agency of church and school, since interwoven with the very life of the church was a school system in which the schoolmaster was an official of the church. The curriculum of the school included conscious, and to a certain extent obligatory, preparation for participation in the service of public worship.

Even from the time when the first synod was held "in exile" at Wesel in 1568, and all the successive national synods of Dort (1578), Middelburg (1581) and the Hague (1586), the strategic importance of the school, as an instrument of furthering the Reformed faith, was recognized. The Synod of Dort (1618-19), the last of the national synods, gave final

form to the creed and the practice of the Dutch Reformed Church, and the matter of schools substantially summed up the preceding synodal enactment:

Schools must be instituted in country places, towns and cities. Religious instruction must be given. The Christian Magistracy should see to it that well-qualified persons taught with suitable compensation. The children of the poor should be educated free. In all the schools only orthodox Christians might teach (Malherbe, 1925: 22) .

To secure these ends suitable means of church inspection of schools was devised. According to Malherbe, it was made

... the duty of the ministers, with an elder, and if necessary, with a magistrate to visit all schools, private as well as public (also on p.22)

There were 'public' schools also at the time, that were controlled and supported by the State. The Calvinists, though, who had been only a minority group at the start, had by their singular aggressiveness, succeeded in dominating the church almost completely and through that exerted an influence on legislation out of proportion to the relative numbers of their adherents. They clearly believed that those who could fix the curriculum, select the textbooks, and certificate teachers, all to suit their ideas, would eventually carry the day, because practically every child in the provinces went to school.

It must not be thought, though, that the DRC had sole authority and control over schools. There was also a larger body of groups, Roman Catholics, Armenians, Mennonists, and

people of relatively independent religious ideas, who agreed amongst themselves only in resisting the encroachment of the Calvinists. These factions neutralised, to a considerable extent, the efforts of the strictly church agents to gain complete control over the schools, and the final seat of authority remained with the civil government. Actual school ordinances of the period show a disposition to keep control in secular hands. Thus, to summarize by means of this quote from Malherbe (1925: 23-4):

... the principal power of the Church lay in the generally acknowledged right to examine as to creed subscription, to enforce which there had been devised the regular visitations of church and consistory for local supervision, and that of the deputies of the classes (presbyteries) for more general oversight.

On the other hand, the strength of the secular side lay, first, in the fact that strictly speaking, the Reformed Church had never been officially established as the exclusive State church of the Netherlands, and second, in the fact that not only did financial support come from the civic authorities, but legal ownership and control were vested in the Government. So that even parochial schools - nay, even churches themselves - were public institutions under the ultimate control of the secular Government.

It should again be said that it is unlikely that the social reality in the Netherlands reflected such rather neat relations as pointed out above.

Some significant changes follow, subsequent to the time which corresponds with the arrival of the Dutch at the Cape, leading to the separation of the Church from the State in

1795 and the schools becoming instruments of the ruling class. These changes impacted on the developments in the Cape in the form of efforts by De Mist in 1804 to promulgate a secular system of education.

How did these educational arrangements influence education at the Cape? Quite clearly, the educational arrangements introduced by the company officials at the Cape bore the marks of the relations which they had come to know in the Netherlands. Malherbe (1925: 24) says that :

... development[s] in Holland were reflected faithfully in the rather haphazard efforts to educate the children at the Cape under the Dutch East India Company up to the end of the 18th century.

Thus, rather than the Western European cases referred to by Archer (1979), educational arrangements did not develop endogenously but were mildly modified and imposed. Although the Cape was not originally intended to be a colony, the pattern of institutional transfer is similar to that found in most other colonies (Kilpatrick, in Malherbe, 1925: 25). Since no alienating prosecution (as in the case of the French Huguenots) had brought the Dutch to Southern Africa, there was no reason for the settlers to be hostile to the institutional practices of the 'fatherland'. Instead, pride in the glory of the United Netherlands - then at the zenith of its prosperity - could have provided them with good reasons to seek to transplant the old life as little changed as possible.

This does not mean that local agents were fully determined in their actions by home authorities, but that they still had to provide their own interpretations in a context very different and removed from the home country. In addition, as soon as they arrived, all subsequent interaction contributed to patterns of relations which, at least partially, derived from internal morphogenesis.

2.3 Interaction: The DEIC Social and Educational Agency and the Reactions to it

When Jan van Riebeeck, on April 6 1652, landed at the Cape, he was accompanied by soldiers and petty officers in the service of the DEIC, mainly Dutch but partly German in nationality. Although it attracted into its service more men from central Europe, the Company remained Dutch in character. They were not a 'carefully selected band of cultured immigrants', but people of modest background who held the prejudices of their class and age. Debroey (1989: 9-10) provides background to the process by which the Company recruited its employees from the streets of Europe. At that time Amsterdam was a refuge for shabby tramps, Dutchmen as well as foreigners. The DEIC was forever in need of sailors and soldiers to work on its ships. So they enlisted crimps, who tracked down the homeless, promised them contracts with the Company and painted a pretty picture

of the future they were bound to have in the Far East. Many of these sailors were not in the best of physical condition, could not hold the ship's victuals and were extremely susceptible to any kind of illness, particularly scurvy. Many of the crew never reached their destination, and large numbers of sick people were put ashore at the Cape.

This all explains the need for a refreshment station at the Cape but also makes it clear that many of these people were certainly not quite the human 'material' ideally suited for the challenging work of setting up a settlement in untamed territory.

What were their attitudes to the Africans? At best the Dutch arrived with an instrumental attitude towards the local people. As pointed out earlier, in the list of instructions for Van Riebeeck it was explicitly stipulated that no-one had the right to trouble the locals or seize their possessions and that he was to stay on good terms with the locals for the sake of cattle bartering. Their task and interests were rather clear and limited: they had to supply visiting ships with fresh water, fruit and meat and avoid confrontation. However, as already pointed out, the attitude and actions of the Dutchmen towards the indigenous people were soon to contradict these original objectives. They called the Khoi and San people 'Hotnot' or 'Hottentot',

indicating the stammering nature of their speech, and soon referred to them as the 'stinking Hotnots' or 'lazy Hotnots'. Their adherence to Calvinism also negatively influenced the way in which they saw relations between themselves and the locals. In general, they divided people into Christians and heathens and based their relations on this distinction. At later stages, a slave could, presumably, gain his freedom through conversion to Christianity. Yet, as will be pointed out later, it did not happen like this in social practice.

The contrast between some of the early reports by visitors to the Cape regarding their attitude towards the local people is worth noting. Most of the reports of the British visitors were positive, which could also be explained by their own negative attitude to the Dutch, whom they blamed for some of the hostile actions of the Khoisan. Thomas Aldworth, a British merchant, arrived at the Cape in 1612 and commented as follows:

And we found the natives of the country to be very courteous and tractable folk, and they did not give us the least annoyance during the time that we were there.

And one year earlier, Ralph Standish and Ralph Croft had written:

The people are loving, afraid at first, by reason of the unkindnesse of the Dutch who come there to make traine Oyle, who killed and stole their Cattel.

(Both the above two quotes cited in Debroey, 1989: 3)

Dutch attitudes were also not consistently negative. Leendert Janzen and M. Proot, two survivors of the wreck of the Haarlem, had had a full year to get acquainted with the environment and the African people. They made a 'Remonstratie' (report) for the Heren XVII in 1649, in which the advantages of a permanent settlement at the Cape were convincingly set out:

Others will maintain that the natives are insolent and cannibalistic, of whom nothing can be expected, and that we shall have to be constantly on the guard; this is pure nonsense, as we shall explain. It cannot be denied that they have neither laws nor government, like many Indians; it is also true that some sailors and soldiers were killed by them, the causes of which are, however, concealed by our people in order to not admit their own guilt. We are convinced that Dutch inhabitants would react exactly the same if their cattle were shot and taken without payment, with no laws to deter them (From Debroey, 1989: 4).

Extracts from many other reports contained in the literature could be quoted. They reflect much variation, but the focus should fall on the attitudes and actions of Van Riebeeck and his men. It is not difficult to detect very negative attitudes and severe clashes of interest in the documented relations of the time. The Company was interested in two commodities which the Khoisan possessed in relative abundance, namely cattle and (potential) manual labour. The attitude of the Dutch was reflected in the fact that they apparently thought nothing of it to simply dispossess the locals of their cattle and to enslave their women and children. The Khoisan, while transgressing the lines of

conventional barter relations on occasion (mostly when repossessing cattle stolen from them) gave all the indications that they were willing to co-exist in reciprocal relations with the settlers. While they could afford it, they had no desire to trade to the extent that would satisfy all the needs of the Europeans and this was a source of severe frustration to Van Riebeeck. His response to this situation speaks volumes:

If, then, there is no longer any trade to be expected, would it matter so much if one deprived them of some 6 or 8 thousand cattle? For this there would be ample opportunity, as we have observed that they are not very strong - indeed they are extremely timorous. Often only 2 or 3 of them will drive a thousand cattle within range of our cannon, and it would therefore be quite easy to cut them off (Cited in Debroey, 1989: 27).

Van Riebeeck was not only frustrated by the Khoisan unwillingness to meet his cattle needs, but he had a particularly big problem with labour. His Company employees were neither capable nor willing to do the work they were instructed to do. He succeeded in luring a limited number of locals into Company employment and coerced others into slavery but because of the increasing conflict between them, resistance against being drawn into the settler labour system became more intense. Many Khoisan were killed or died from disease, others moved further away from the Cape settlement and those who were in European employment did not make very productive workers. Van Riebeeck's solution was

the typical one of the time. He got permission to import slaves from other parts of Africa, and the East, to work as unskilled labour. In 1658 about 400 slaves were imported from West Africa, but soon there were more imports, increasing the number of slaves to equal that of the settlers.

To further cut down on their operational costs, the Company, in 1657, started releasing potential settlers from its service and encouraged its servants to hire themselves to free farmers as 'knechts'. During the latter part of the seventeenth century it became Company policy to encourage the settlement and influx of more Europeans. They came from Holland, France, Germany and England. The largest single group to settle at the Cape was a group of some two hundred French Huguenot refugees in 1689. The white settlers established themselves as farmers and traders. Some of them farmed for the local markets, and also to meet the demands of the DEIC (Davenport, 1979: 18-9; Christi, 1986: 31; Debroey, 1989: 51-4).

Despite its original diversity, the settler population were 'coaxed into cultural conformity, with the language of the Netherlands and the religion of the Dutch Reformed Church for cement, from which emerged the Afrikaner people, an amalgam of nationalities, which gradually came into being'

from the eighteenth century onwards (Davenport, 1979: 19).

Despite its extreme self-centredness, obsession with its own problems and lack of concern for the interests of local people, the Dutch, using their capacity to coerce, facilitated the development of a local dynamic, the emergence of forces which had an interest in resisting the Company.

In an attempt to escape from the Company administration's control over their lives (especially with regard to their relations with the slaves) and its trading monopoly, settlers gradually moved further inland and became pastoralists or 'trekboere'. In this way they expanded the borders of the settlement, came into contact with the Xhosa people and became increasingly difficult to control by the authorities in the Cape. This resulted inevitably in the deterioration of master-slave relations, the long history of bitter wars between Africans and Whites in the interior and the failure of the Dutch to retain their cultural hegemony in the colony.

The very selective description up to this point must not be seen as an attempt to cover the historical developments of the time, but to extract specific items of relevance to our exploration of educational relations. The same applies when

discussing education matters.

**Educational innovations and relations between the Company
and Khoisan and slaves**

Despite the limited original objectives and financial constraints, there are good reasons to believe that the Company officials saw it to be in their interest that a certain minimum of schooling be received by both their own children and the children of those being subordinated to their order.

One of the DEIC's concerns was to see that its employees, when removed from their home environment, remained united in a common culture. In view of the fundamental position occupied by Calvinism in the worldview adhered to by the Company, they would clearly have sought an education perpetuating the dogmas of Calvinism (See Debroey, 1989: 39).

It is even easier to see that it was in their interest to have those who served them, but did not adhere to their worldview, subjected to formal education. The slaves and Khoisan employees would have been more able to do what they were supposed to do in the first place, namely serve their masters, if they could communicate in Dutch, the language of their masters. But then, it could be that what lay behind

the Company's approach to the education of the slaves, was not such a direct economic consideration, but rather the settlers' concerns about the so-called 'un-Christian' or immoral lifestyle of the slaves, and their desire to exert social control over them.

Subjecting the slaves (adult and child) to their masters' religion through formal education would draw them into the value system of the settlers, and it was believed by the settlers that it would contribute to a more positive approach towards work and also an abandonment of their 'immoral ways'. Christian-orientated formal education was seen as a potential 'cure' (Kalaway, 1984: 45-47) that would benefit both the slaves and the settlers (See Also Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 149).

There is much scope for debate about the real motives and intentions of the Dutch. Some, like Pierre Van Den Berghe (1965: 14-21) argue that these relations were characterized by paternalism more than anything else; that they were relatively relaxed and that a substantial degree of mixing across racial and master-slave divides did occur. Others want to put exclusive emphasis on the religious motivation (De Klerk, 1975) and others again on the economic motives (Christie, 1985). But it is important to see these relations from a number of angles. As a general remark: simply because

the colonists benefitted economically from slave labour does not mean that their relationships with the slaves were based exclusively on economic interests. Simply because the slaves were in a subordinate position does not mean that they did not gain from these relations. Simply because they gained from it does not mean that they did not desire freedom from its bondage or that they accepted the state of colonization (Mungazi, 1989: Chapter 2). Historians and social scientists tend to make these complex matters far too clear-cut.

With the above remarks in mind, it should be safe to argue that the DEIC was restricted from taking drastic steps to introduce formal education on the basis of their own priorities and limited budget, but they were motivated nevertheless to proceed, by a combination of factors which had to do with the need to increase the effectiveness and productivity of labour, to ensure social and cultural order among themselves and to achieve cultural hegemony over those who served them. To place these in some order of priority is a waste of time. It is more important to explore how each of these objectives was achieved, or not achieved.

The first formal schools made their appearance in Southern Africa as part of these new social relations. The first school was opened on 17 April 1658. This was less than a

month after the arrival of the first shipment of 170 slaves. The school was set up specifically for the DEIC's slaves and, as far as is known, it took them irrespective of ages (Kalaway, 1988: 45). But it appears that the early schools during the company days normally contained the children of slaves as well as those of their white masters. For instance, when the second school was opened in 1663, it was attended by twelve white children, four slave children and one Khoi child (Christie, 1986: 33 and Davenport, 1979: 347).

The content of education reflected the interests referred to earlier, albeit with a marked religious orientation. According to Cook (in Hellman, 1946: 349):

From 1652 until 1795 the Cape was concerned with the problem of providing slaves and free heathen Hottentots with a type of education which would make Christians of them. Book learning was necessary only in so far as it enabled them to read their Bibles.

Education in the Company period was limited to the catechism and the 3 R's. However, the emphasis was clearly on the religious content, as is reflected in the views of Behr and MacMillan (1966: 89):

During the whole period of the Dutch regime at the Cape, formal elementary education meant instruction in the doctrines of the Dutch Reformed church. The pupils learned prayers, passages from the Bible, and the catechism. There would also be singing lessons in preparation for church services. Some of the abler students would also acquire the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

It is debatable whether the limited content of education presented could be ascribed to limited intentions. Yet, at the end of 1663 it was reported by the later Commandant Wagenaer, that the sick-comforter Ernestus Back, who was the first teacher, was doing his job well, and that:

... apart from the free Dutch children, there are already a few black slave-children, beside one or two little Hottentots, who master the Dutch language so well that some can say the Lord's prayer by heart (in Debroey, 1989: 40).

There is sufficient evidence to suspect that much of the cause for the limited approach to education and the eventual 'deterioration into mere formalism' lay more with the lack of competent teachers than with the choice of emphasis. Even if they wanted to introduce a more comprehensive and utilitarian education, the authorities were limited by what they had, and the costs of importing and employing teachers as teachers.

Conflict and change in educational arrangements

The first suggestions of segregated schooling came from the church in 1676. (See Giliomee and Schlemmer, 1989, for the first friction that led to segregation). The church was, ostensibly, concerned about the spiritual and moral lives of all the people who inhabited the Cape, but clearly more so about the European children. The recommendation to separate children of different races was not primarily a racist one,

but was based on the desire to have a separate school for the slave children. In 1685 a separate school was established for slave children (Kalaway, 1984: 46). From then onwards racial segregation of education became a permanent feature of South African education. According to Cook:

... there were three types of schools at the Cape: (a) schools for slaves belonging to the Dutch East India Company; (b) public and private schools to which both Europeans and their household slaves were admitted, and (c) schools for the Hottentots. During this period racial colour was not of paramount importance in education. The slaves of the Company lived under social conditions which gave rise to much immorality, and it was therefore repugnant to the burghers to send their household slaves to schools where they would rub shoulders with the Company slaves. Accordingly, they were admitted to schools for European children. Education at the Cape at this time was therefore organised in accordance with the way of life of three distinct groups (in Hellman, 1946: 349).

Of course, what is also clear in the above statement, is the importance of the typical division in colonial society between the free and the unfree. Education for slave children became a purposeful process aimed at incorporating the slaves into a European-dominated social and labour system (Cook in Kalaway, 1984: 48). Education for the settler child also now reflected the differential social positions with more clarity. Where slave education was aimed at ensuring obedience to the master, white settler education was aimed at socio-political ascendancy. Malherbe (1925: 47) writes:

While on the one hand, it is due to the strong church (Calvinistic) influence that education often deteriorated into mere formalism, it gave the people, on the other hand, a type of education which was perhaps as well suited to their needs at the time as any we could devise today. It did not cultivate erudition, yet it produced pioneers - men who had to break-in the country. From their earliest youth boys were practised in the use of firearms till they became probably the best marksmen in the world. The type of education helped preserve them against spiritual as well as physical dangers.

The point needs to be made even clearer: the type of education that they received prepared them for a life of social supremacy, made them capable and skilled to act assertively in situations of conflict and perhaps confirmed a mentality that included violence as a means of solving problems.

Education for Black children. Up to now the local groups referred to do not include the black Bantu-speaking people. This is because for nearly 150 years after the founding of the settlement little or no contact took place between local 'Bantu-speaking' chiefdoms and the European inhabitants of the Cape.

In conclusion. Right from the outset, there were signs of failure in the efforts of the dominant group. Although they remained in the ascendant position, very few of their specific projects succeeded. The failure started with the Dutch making enemies of those who should have been

counterparts in reciprocal trade. The economic position of the Company deteriorated gradually, and the education which was supposed to contribute to the solving of some economic, social and political problems was not achieving the desired objectives. No doubt, the unwillingness of the regime to make social investments and the accompanying incompetence of teachers led not only to failure but also to some unintended consequences.

2.4 The Conditioning of Failure and the Elaboration of Domination

Despite the relative clarity of the educational aims held by the Company officials, despite the rather close correspondence between their educational and other social objectives, and despite their willingness to act coercively to implement whatever measures they saw to be in their own interests, it would be a mistake to assume that the outcomes or social consequences of education as anticipated by the Company were easily achieved, if at all. On the contrary, there is much more reason to believe that not only did the Company fail in its educational objectives, but it also failed in all its major social, economic and political objectives.

Manifestations of failure

In the first instance, one does not need 'official figures'

to realize that the education provided did not reach the larger part of the 'target population'. The demand for education was not particularly great and there is no indication that the idea of formal education was catching on among those who were supposed to be exposed to its effects (See Elphick and Giliomee, 1989). Secondly, as already pointed out, the content of education did not correspond with the economic goals and needs of the Company. This introduces the third manifestation of failure: if it is argued that their education failed to contribute meaningfully to economic production, the question is whether it was not perhaps effective in cultural reproduction - did this education not succeed in terms of the actual content, that is, did it not succeed in spreading Christianity among the local people? Or did it not perhaps ensure social solidarity among the Europeans?

The answers to these questions are mostly negative. It appears from the emphasis on religious content and the stated objectives about the approach to local people, that the relationship between education and the 'Christianization' of slaves and Khoisan people stands at the crux of an evaluation of the success or failure of the DEIC education project. It is also a crucial means by which to gauge the openness of the Cape society, since it is often assumed that the Cape society was comparatively open, that

is, to the extent that slaves could be emancipated once they were baptized. MacCrone (1937: 186) and others who refer to religion as the only criterion of social status suggest that

...

... a Non-European at the Cape, once he had been baptized, was immediately accepted as a member of the Christian community, and as such, was entitled to his freedom, if a slave.

Elphick and Shell (1989), in a conclusive study on the issue, disprove the traditional historiographical view as held by MacCrone and others by pointing out that it was not as, for instance Theal, suggested, that

in those days nearly every one believed it his duty to have his slave children baptized, and hence those who were born in this colony usually became free (Elphick and Shell, 1989: 186).

Instead, it was not at all easy for a slave or Khoikhoi child to become baptized, since adult candidates had to show some formal knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian faith. Since there were no full-time missionaries at the time, the incidence of proselytisation can literally be counted on one hand. Formal education exposed a tiny handful of Khoisan and substantially more slave children to the European culture and tradition, with the stated objective of teaching the Dutch language and Christian beliefs. Still, the schools only affected Company slaves in or near Cape Town, and the majority of slaves were in private employment. In the rural areas some free burghers,

who often hired knechts to educate their own children, possibly had their knechts teach their slaves as well; but only two contracts between employer and employee were found in which such duties were specified. By 1779 a total of eight schools in the colony (mostly urban) reported 696 pupils of whom, however, only 82 were slave children. Clearly, then, although Christianization was company policy, the slaveholders were not overly zealous in educating or Christianizing their slaves. To take the matter even further, the researchers then compared the figures on slave baptism with figures for manumission, and came to the conclusion that neither education nor the acceptance of the Christian faith was an escape hatch to freedom: most baptized slaves were not freed and most manumitted slaves apparently had not been baptized. The point confirmed for the purposes of this study is that, if the stated policy of the Company was to use education for the purpose of spreading the Christian faith among local people and slaves, it must be described as a failed project (Elphick and Shell, 1989).

Whether education was successful in so far as it promoted social solidarity among the Europeans, is the final matter to consider. The study by Gerrit Schutte (1989) on the 'Company and colonists at the Cape, 1652-1795' provides conclusive information to the effect that there were

significant divisions within the ranks of the Company, and more importantly, the relationship between the Company and the Free Burghers reflected very little in the form of value consensus and was certainly not without conflict. The Company was a particularly centralized, bureaucratic organization and had little else but economically motivated relations with other groups. (Evidence for the above can be found in many sources concerning The Barbier Rebellion and the Cape Patriot Movement - see for instance Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 315 and Debroey, 1989: chapter 5).

The conclusion arrived at is that Cape society was more than only fragmented along religious, racial and class lines - there were significant differences within the ranks of the Company and between the Company officials and rural people. Moreover the particular clashes of interest between the Company and rural people were not the same as between the Company and the Cape Town inhabitants. These differences were so acute that, in the wake of the European political revolution of 1789, there were efforts to follow the European example in pursuit of solutions to the local conflicts. The details of these events are less important than the implication that the Company could not succeed in creating and maintaining harmonious social and political relations among Europeans by means of the education that they offered. Instead, they watered, if not planted, the

seeds of the Afrikaner culture which emerged as a reaction against 'colonialism' and foreign authority.

Reasons for the Failure of Agency

Utilizing the theoretical means introduced in this study one can identify a number of subtle reasons and some more obvious reasons for the failure of educational agency. The following three reasons have been identified as the main reasons:

- i Clashes of interest and ideological contradictions
- ii Financial constraints and incompetence
- iii The transformation of agency

These will be discussed briefly:

i) **Clashes of interest and ideological contradictions** The most obvious explanation for why so few local children attended the schools must be found in the conditioning effects of their own historical experience of education. The contradiction between the European notion of education as a formalized and separated sphere of life was alien, and the content of Christian education, the skills to read and write, were all irrelevant to people who lived in a traditional pre-industrial society. There was little to gain from going to school and much to lose. The institutional form of formal education and its implications had the effect

of alienating people from their traditional societies and the authority of the chiefs.

Formal education did not only clash with traditional interests, but it was also not desired by the Free Burghers who employed local people and slaves on their farms and in the new towns. These people did not want the slave girls who worked for them to go to school, because they were needed around the homes of their masters and mistresses for domestic work. In addition, slave-owners feared that education would stimulate slaves to make demands 'above their station' (Kalaway, 1984: 48).

ii) Financial constraints and incompetence

A relevant question is why the Company did not coerce people into schools. And the answer is probably, more than anything else, related to the modest ambitions that the Company had with regard to the Cape. In many ways, it is not so much what they did but rather what they did not do which is of interest. As Molteno (1984: 47) points out, the Company had ongoing financial problems and could not spend much on social 'luxuries' which did not show much promise of producing the skills needed to maintain the station. He suggests that because of

the bankruptcy and political disintegration of the DEIC, a corrupt and weak Cape administration, political complications in Europe, and economic depression and

epidemics of smallpox, it is not surprising that formal education was never a policy priority for the Company. Its operations certainly did not depend on it

Along with the incompetence of officials referred to above, the incompetence and unavailability of qualified teachers would have wrecked any form of education and thwarted the social outcome desired by the controlling agents. (See Malherbe, 1925, about the vagabond teacher system and the failure of education, particularly in the rural areas).

iii) The transformation of agency

The Europeans who arrived with Jan Van Riebeeck underwent some significant transformations. They arrived as a mixed group of people without specific character except for their status as employees of the Company. The Company itself, as an entity, changed from one that existed as a mere cog in the global DEIC structure to one that was compelled to take steps in the local situation, that had the unintended consequence of cementing it to the local conditions. The temporary settlement was turned into a colony in which colonial relations had their effects on all agents. Increasingly, Company officialdom had to suffer the consequences of the resistance to its over-assertive agency. Not only did they see no option but to import slaves and free some of their servants to solve the increasing problems of labour and operating costs, but they also suffered opposition to their actions in other institutional sphere, among them education. As temporary visitors, they were

transformed into permanent local residents - their interests were transformed from mere instrumental concerns to vested interests - interests that emerged from the interaction between themselves and other groups in the context of the local social system. The point is that educational actions of one agent, the Company, failed because it was from the start insensitive to the interests of the local people and, as time went on and interest-based relations became more diverse and complex, the chances of one self-centred agent catering for the needs of the variety, grew increasingly slim.

The failure induced by the local inhabitants and the slaves is not unexpected and must also be explained in the morphogenetic sense. Of course, there were clashes of interest and ideas from the start, which provide the basis for the eventual failure but, once again, the morphogenetic dynamic made crucial contributions. It must be said that the locals were transformed from participants in reciprocal relations with symbiotic outcomes (in pre-colonial relations) to competitors for cattle and grazing and to acting in opposition and resistance to the imposed institutional arrangements.

2.5 Conclusions - The Failure of Social Agency and the Elaboration of Racial Domination

Not only did the Company fail to achieve its objectives in institutional spheres more peripheral to its operations, but it can be argued that it also failed comprehensively to succeed as a commercial venture or as a colonial invasion. (See Debroey, 1989: 104-110, for illuminating extracts from reports about "the last convulsions" of the Company) .

The elaboration of domination: There is only one possible way in which the Dutch period can be described as a success and that is that it moulded and elaborated the pattern of white domination over black. By the end of the Dutch era this master-divide was well in place and was to become a crucial factor in pre-conditioning the following period.

Elphick and Giliomee's (1989) discussion on the origins and entrenchment of European dominance at the Cape, 1652 -c.1840 provides useful insights into the process by which the Europeans / whites gained control of society and created exclusivist institutions on which apartheid would be built in the twentieth century. Since it is such a crucial pre-conditioning variable in relation to later developments, this section will be concluded with a brief discussion of the debate about the role of the Dutch period in setting the pattern for future race relations.

It appears that there are, broadly speaking, two influential

schools of thought on the role of the pre-industrial Cape in creating European dominance. The first view was propagated by the liberal historians of the 1920s and 1930s, beginning with W.M. MacMillan (1927) , who firmly located the origins of modern South African race relations in the Dutch period before 1795. MacMillan and his successors argued that Calvinism, isolation and frontier strife imprinted upon Europeans a strong sense of group identity, a consciousness of their destiny as a people, and a willingness to employ distinction of race and colour as devices for social and economic discrimination. These liberal historians emphasized that racial dominance was born in South Africa, not imported, and that it was chiefly a product of frontier regions in the eighteenth century. The most influential exponent of this view was I.D. Macrone (1937). In 1970 Martin Leggassick (1980), in reaction to the liberal school, rejected the 'frontier tradition', arguing that racism was not intensified on the frontier. His alternative view, subsequently taken up by a generation of revisionist historians, many of them Marxists, emphasized the role of post-1867 industrial capitalism and, by implication at least, de-emphasized the formative influence of the pre-industrial period. Historians of this tradition tend to deny that a comprehensive racial order had formed in the earlier Dutch period. Unlike the liberals, who stressed the importance of racial identity in the social structure of the early Cape, these revisionists stress the importance of

class. A third, intermediate, position has recently been staked out by Van Arkel, Quispel and Ross (in Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 550, 552). These authors agree with the liberals that the rigidity of the South African racial order originated in the pre-industrial period, but they also agree with the revisionists in placing emphasis neither on the frontier nor on the eighteenth century. For them the key impulse to European supremacy came from the Cape's integration into the world economy during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Elphick and Giliomee (1989, Chapter 11) add their interpretation, which bears some similarity to those of Van Arkel, Quispel and Ross, but unlike the latter, they regard the racial order as largely in place by the end of the eighteenth century and emphasize political intervention and other causes in addition to the forces of the world economy. On the race/class issue, they argue that in the Cape society of 1840, race and class were both salient social groupings; in the all-important agricultural regions, race and class reinforced each other at the top and at the bottom of the society, with all the landholders being European and almost all those other than Europeans being low-paid unskilled labourers. Elphick and Giliomee (1989) believe that scholars have asked the wrong questions about the antecedents of this society by asking how it *emerged* in the course of South African history. They believe, rather, that

it was **created** by legal fiat of the Dutch East India Company in the first decade of colonization. The interesting question, they say, is not how it emerged but how it survived two centuries of geographic expansion, economic development and demographic change.

The focus placed by Elphick and Giliomee (1989) is evidently important, but also problematic. To their credit, it appears that they want to move beyond determinism in their explanation but they also make the mistake of over-emphasizing the autonomy of agents. By implying that the starting point of the debate is with the creation of the legal framework that defined slave and master relations, it appears that they neglect other important explanatory variables. They do not recognize the importance of either pre-conditioning or emergence. One finds it particularly intriguing that all these authors appear to agree that racism is a South African phenomenon and that all that needs to be debated is when it came into being. The understanding of the origins of the racial order as entangled in the pre-conditioning effects of the European anthropological and colonial mentality, could also be the first step towards understanding the type of interaction that is likely to occur in a society like that of the Cape Colony. Even more significant is that one could then become aware that the existing order is the product of the combination of forces, i.e. the preconditioning of the past, instrumental actions

of contemporary actors and agents that maintain and/or change the context, and many other less structured forces. Thus, indeed, one should not ignore the instrumental actions of contemporary agents as making possible an existing order, but neither should the conditioning effects of the past and the autonomy of interaction from which the unexpected or unintended can emerge, be ignored. After all, the legal relations referred to by Elphick and Giliomee (1989) defined the master-slave relationship and not race relations; the racial character of relations was conditioned by culturally-based attitudes and emerged from actions where interests overlapped with the legal and racial divide.

Thus, the interpretation of Elphick and Giliomee (1989) is correct and important to the extent that it focuses our attention on the question of the tenacity of the racial order. Equally important, and this is what the study is primarily concerned with, is the extent to which the dominant group actually succeeded in achieving its specific objectives. On the one hand, scrutiny of the history reflects a series of complex interactions from which the Europeans emerged as dominant in most cases, and we must seek to understand why and how this power differential was maintained. We must understand what facilitated the dominance of the Europeans. This section ought to have answered some of these questions. In addition, the morphogenetic perspective provides one with insights into a

number of other questions. The morphogenetic perspective would, for instance, help us to understand that this dominance can never be guaranteed and that its decline, even if it takes place only now, at the end of the twentieth century, could be explained with reference to the reactions conditioned by the originally self-centred agents, even though the process took such a long period of time to work itself out.

The debate about objectives was not exhausted in the earlier discussions, since there is still the possibility that the Dutch authorities did not necessarily expect to make a profit. The fact is that they never did, in any case. Yet, they would surely have wanted to keep their costs to a minimum. They did not achieve this basic objective, mainly because the settlement expanded and developed a degree of independence that was unforeseen. Three processes, (1) the release of employees from the service of the Company, (2) the importation of slaves and (3) the inshore movement of the settlement, all contributed to changes in the environment in terms of which the original short-term had to be modified. It resulted in the transformation of agency as new interests emerged and the colony became a much more complex society than a mere refreshment station an outcome not foreseen.

Finally then, successful agency, particularly in terms of

specific institutional projects, is never guaranteed even for an oppressive monopolist. The reasons for the potential failure can best be found, not by focusing on a single variable, but by understanding agency in the complex relationship with the pre-conditioning effects of structural and cultural context, the relative autonomy of agency and indeterminate nature of human interaction.

Moreover, the success/failure of agency must be seen as closely related to the emergence of structural, cultural and agential transformation, which is often unintended. It is particularly the failure that derived from the transformation of agency that is of interest. Failure resulting from direct oppositional action by the local inhabitants and the slaves is not unexpected, since there were obvious clashes of interest and ideas from the start. These clashes provide the basis for the eventual failure. Not only does the morphogenetic perspective provide a framework for uncovering this process, but it uncovers the more subtle dynamics that lead to change and failure. In this regard, it is pointed out in this study how the locals were transformed from participants in reciprocal relations with symbiotic outcomes (in pre-colonial relations) to competitors for cattle and grazing, and to acting in opposition and resistance to the imposed institutional arrangements. On the other hand, the Europeans and the Company were equally transformed: as the temporary

settlement was transformed into a 'permanent' colony, the dominant agent became less of an external power and more of a permanent local resident. Their interests were transformed from mere short term instrumental concerns to vested interests - interests that emerged from the interaction between themselves and other groups in the context of the local social system. The point is that the educational actions of one agent, the Company, failed because it was from the start insensitive to the interests of the local people and, as time went by and interest-based relations became more diverse and complex, the chances of one self-centred agent catering for the needs of the variety, grew increasingly slim.

Education by the end of the Dutch period contributed very little to the achievement of the original social aims of the dominant agent.

3. Educational Agency and Failure During the Period of British Colonial Rule

3.1 Introduction

In this section, the period of British colonial rule in South Africa comes under scrutiny. While it could be analyzed in its own right, the way in which it is approached here is to illustrate how the inter-group and educational relations in the Dutch period pre-conditioned patterns of a divided society which would again affect subsequent social

and educational relations. In other words, the power, race and class divisions as reflected in, among other things, educational arrangements, were already in place by the end of the Dutch period.

The British, who clearly entered the local arena with their own objectives, ideas and actions, in the initial stages (1795-1815) reflected a mixture of accommodation and moderate reformism. The question being explored here is how the existing relations and patterns of the past constrained the new rulers, and how they acted on the basis of their own interests to re-structure the society in correspondence with the past. Thus, this exploration rejects the notion that the apparent structural and cultural reproduction was a mere matter of structural and cultural determination. Instead, it will be argued that essential similarities existed between the British and Dutch rulers in terms of interests, ideology and attitude. These should be considered to understand how the British, on the one hand, paved the way for their own fortune and misfortune but were, on the other hand, constrained by existing attitudinal and structural patterns.

Of course, the same applies to the oppositional agents, i.e. the same basic reasons to oppose the British existed as there had been to oppose the Dutch, since both were perceived as intruders invading the life-worlds of the local inhabitants, wishing to impose their will rather than to

interact with the aim of accommodating local needs and interests. The arrogance, self-centredness and chauvinism of the British were not new to the local inhabitants.

In addition to exploring the effects of earlier interaction, this section is also concerned with the way in which the British period affected the social and educational landscape of the 20th century. Again the argument, based on the research findings, is that the dominant group failed in achieving specific institutional objectives but nevertheless contributed to the elaboration of the structure and ideologies underpinning white domination, that is, at least on general social and educational levels.

Format of the section: Under the heading Pre-conditioning, the effects of the Dutch period and the features of the intervening agent at the time of entry will be investigated. The objective here is to establish how the historical experience of the British influenced their approach to educational and social matters. Next, the central project of the British, 'Education for Anglicization' and the accompanying dynamics of the efforts to establish a state system, the role of the missionaries and the reactions of the local inhabitants to these will be explored. This will all be done under the heading Interaction. Finally, under the heading Change and Elaboration, the success or failure of the dominant agent will be evaluated.

Periodization: The emphasis in the following text will fall on the period of High Colonialism between 1815-1860s. It is in this period that the drive of the British to transform the society was at its most intense and it excludes, firstly, the initial period from 1795 to 1815 and the later stage from the discovery of minerals to the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, which meant the end of British rule. The first period is considered in so far as it is necessary to explain the transformation of the dominant agent from a temporary caretaker to an aggressive imperialist, but is excluded for analysis in its own right. The period following the discovery of diamonds is similarly excluded because it involves the relations emerging from the onset of industrialization. Thus, it introduces a new, albeit complementary, storyline and is not required to verify the outcome of the agency under scrutiny, since it was played out by this time. Yet the development of African and Afrikaner Nationalism, both of which gained momentum in the late nineteenth century, will be considered as the unintended consequences of prior agency, but will be more anticipated than explored.

Other demarcations and qualifications: The emphasis is on the social and educational development of the Cape Colony and will only concern other geographical areas in Southern Africa through anticipating developments in Natal, because

of the clarity with which the pattern of British rule developed in the later stages as a forerunner of the apartheid society. In addition, the focus on the Cape Colony is justified because it functioned as a 'sovereign political unit' throughout the period under scrutiny. For instance, when the authorities wanted to impose a 'state system', the Colony was effectively the state referred to.

Finally, while extensive exploration of historical material was required to arrive at the conclusions reflected here, the presentation will be rather selective and focused on the theme, and is certainly not intended to serve as a history of education in the Cape Colony.

3.2 Pre-Conditioning of Interaction

3.2.1 The Pre-Conditioning Effect of the Dutch Period

When the British captured the Cape from the Dutch in 1795, they took over responsibility for a thinly populated, loose-knit territory. Cape Town was still the only port of entry to the region. With fifteen thousand inhabitants (including ten thousand slaves), 1 145 houses, and such public buildings as the castle, the slave lodge, and the principal Dutch Reformed church, it was also the only real town in the colony. Stellenbosch had a mere 70 houses, Swellendam 30, and Graaff-Reinet about a dozen mud-houses covered with thatch. From the European perspective, the colony's function was still little more than the half-way station to Asia; it

yielded nothing else of significance to the metropolitan centres of the globe (Thompson, 1990: 51).

Social relations in general: Despite its original intentions of only economic involvement, the society emerging during the course of the Dutch period gradually acquired all the major features of the typical colonial society. In morphogenetic terms, one can observe an elaboration of social and institutional relations and ideas on the side of the dominant to maintain dominance, and in other spheres of society one can observe the rise to greater significance of a number of groupings in response to domination. By the end of the 18th century, the social landscape had taken on some distinct features. In the first place, the stratified racial divide was well in place - an outstanding feature of the social structure of the Colony was the simultaneous dominance and utter dependence of the white colonists on the labour of slaves and the indigenous people. In Europe, where the settler community had originated, ethnic chauvinism was already deeply embedded in the popular psyche. At the Cape, where the colonists were subject to a commercial government that practised slavery and the slave trade, they were conditioned to life as privileged people, distinguished from their slaves and serfs by physical and cultural as well as legal and economic criteria. They were also growing apart from society in north-western Europe, where social and economic conditions differed profoundly.

(Thompson, 1990)

The white colonists were themselves an all but a homogeneous community. Capetonians (traders, innkeepers, and artisans), arable farmers and remote trekboers had conflicting interests and varied ideas about matters of crucial importance. Nevertheless, in spite of widespread promiscuity, the colonists perceived themselves as a distinct and distinctly 'Christian' community. Anders Sparrman recorded that in the 1770s all "Christians" were called "baas." (cited in Thompson, 1990). The distinction was arguably more racial than religious. Thompson proceeds to argue that :

Christianity had limited influence in South Africa during the eighteenth century. The handful of Calvinist ministers appointed by the government did not challenge the norms and values that corresponded with material conditions that placed people of European descent above others (p.52).

The society was racial, stratified and violent. For the subordinated peoples, life in the colony was nasty, brutish, and short. The Cape slaves experienced a form of subjection that was in many respects harsher than the slavery practised in the Americas. Extracted from diverse native cultures and dispersed in small, mixed lots among many owners, most managed to create some space for human dignity and many others fled to freedom at great risk to themselves. The indigenous pastoralists fared no better. Deprived of their means of independent subsistence, they were incorporated

into a society where their masters adopted methods of control that they were accustomed to applying to slaves. (Thompson, 1990: 52)

On the Eastern Frontier, conflicts between Trekboers and the Xhosa had already led to numerous wars of dispossession through which the Xhosa lost their land and cattle, and to erosion of land traditionally used by the Xhosa for the grazing of their cattle. Trekboers were a particular source of problems for any authority. They were motivated by a spirit of rebellion and desired freedom from interference in their lives and relations. As the treatment of slaves grew more moderate in other parts of the world, so did it in Cape Town and other towns, but not in the rural areas and the frontier. Ironical as it is, influenced by the political revolutions in Europe and America, the rebels or Cape Patriots demanded their freedom without considering the logical application of what they demanded to the slaves whom they kept in bondage. To illustrate this contradictory notion of freedom, one need only look at their formulated demands:

... that also a bushman and a male or female hottentot, captured by a commando or by an individual, now or before, will be the property of the burgher in whose house he now lives, and will serve him from generation to generation; if such hottentots escape, the owner will have the right to recapture and punish them as he wishes. (Debroey, 1989: 108)

These complex relations were to challenge and contradict British actions and ideas in some ways and complement them

in other ways.

The state of education as found by the British

There is no need to elaborate on the decline of education as described at the end of the Dutch period, except to consider aspects that would have an effect on later relations. With the decline in standing of the Dutch authorities, their growing financial crisis and over-all corruption, education, already not a high priority, suffered accordingly. The system based on the body of Scholarchs was inefficient and a final plan issued by the Scholarchs in 1791 in an effort to improve the schools was only partially carried out. (See Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 347-8 for a good summary).

How many children there were actually under instruction it is difficult to find out, especially in the country districts. From a Report of 1779 submitted to the Governor, it appears that there were, in Cape Town alone, eight public elementary schools giving instruction to 686 children in spelling, reading, writing and elements of religion according to the tenets of the DRC. Considering that the population of Cape Town was just over 4 000, this proportion is comparatively high. But statistics like these hide information about the distribution and quality of education. In the interior rural areas, there were no schools within reasonable distance and many children grew up without any formal schooling, and the schools that existed in Cape Town

and some small villages were of such poor standard, Egbertus Bergh wrote in a lengthy report, :

... that, for want of anything better, they could only give little children some bad instructions in reading, spelling, writing and calculating, besides the elements of the reformed religion. The teachers in these schools were incompetent and often dissolute fellows (Cited in Debroey, 1989: 115).

Still, there was a strong desire for education amongst the inhabitants, as found by the Circuit Commission of 1811:

The parents were not indifferent, on the contrary, most of them expressed their wishes with tears in their eyes that this might be provided for them in one manner or another, feeling themselves that their children growing up without education, without instruction, without even a knowledge of the first principles of religion and morality would at best be like nothing else than savages (in Malherbe, 1925: 45)

While it could not be denied that it was due to the DRC's efforts that at least some of the children did not grow up altogether destitute of education, the role of the church in education was also rather ambiguous. The Company was intolerant of any church other than the Reformed, and any educational initiatives which did not aim at bringing people into the DRC fold were repressed. Bergh (in Debroey, 1925: 115) refers to cases when non-Calvinist inhabitants wanted to build a school and pay for the expenses themselves but, as the reformed religion had to be taught at schools, they could not put their plan into effect.

The figures above also do not mention anything about the racial distribution of educational opportunities. This time,

at the end of the Dutch period, also saw the beginnings of missionary education directed at the Khoikhoi people. While the first missionaries, of the Moravian Missionary Society, were not insensitive to the conditions that the Khoikhoi faced, they maintained good relations with the authorities, since they had a tradition of quietism towards secular power and an authoritarian, paternalistic attitude towards their flock, which enabled them to settle down within the confines of Cape society and government policy. They did not play their role with the same zeal as did the DRC and were certainly not intent on playing the role of social critic, as became the case with the arrival of the London Missionary Society. Consequently, education for black people made extremely slow headway during the 18th century and by the end of the century only very small numbers of children enjoyed the most basic form of schooling.

In conclusion, Cape society was characterized by racial and other divisions that permeated all power, and institutional relations. The San had been driven out of the territory and the Khoikhoi had been all but crushed. The trekboere were emerging as a force that would challenge any form of interference in their lives, and the Xhosas and soon other black groups were capable not only of taking on the military might of the Europeans but actually defeating it. The educational sphere was largely underdeveloped, for reasons mostly related to neglect and disregard of education as an

official priority, and was consequently dealt with on an almost *ad hoc* basis. The educational innovations that existed were so ineffectual that they are almost not worth mentioning.

Effect of future relations on future interaction

The crucial questions being asked here are, firstly, whether existing social and educational arrangements served to mould future relations and, secondly, whether they could be linked to the failure of agency in future relations. If the answer provided to these were simply positive, then one could be accused of simplistic theorizing and determinism. As was argued in the theoretical section of this thesis, the cultural, structural, systemic and attitudinal patterns that took form in a preceding period of time could not simply determine the features of the future. At the most, they provided new actors with options which they had to act upon consciously or unconsciously. Thus the 'reproduction' of past relations is inseparably linked to the actions of real actors, whether they act on instruction or their own volition. It means that the new actors had to perceive their situation in roughly the same way as did the previous agents. The same would apply to oppositional and primary agents. When all that is said, there is still no guarantee that causal links will be found between past and present action and interaction, except that they do have to deal with what is there, i.e. inherited from the past, in some

way or another. In order to explore the features of the new dominant agent, the following sub-section will focus on the social and educational ideology and approach of the new rulers.

3.2.2 The British as a Colonial Power - Social and Educational Ideology

In 1795, following a minor skirmish with an already self-defeated Dutch resistance, the control of the Cape Colony was transferred from the Dutch East India Company to the British government. But the situation changed again in 1803 when the Cape was returned to Dutch control, only to be returned again in 1806 to British control. Each of these transfers was the result of political events and decisions taken in Europe. The temporary British occupation of 1795 followed the French invasion of the United Netherlands at the beginning of that year, and was undertaken by arrangement with the exiled House of Orange. Then in February 1803, in terms of the Treaty of Amiens, the Batavian Republic (as the United Netherlands had become known) took possession. But the Batavian Republic had been in control for less than three years when, in January 1806, the British invaded for a second time, this time with some idea of permanent occupation. This permanency was only later confirmed by the Treaty of Vienna in 1815, during the general pacification at the end of the Napoleonic wars, as part of a triangular deal involving the governments of the

United Kingdom, the United Netherlands, and Sweden. Not only must this relatively quick succession of administrations have had a disturbing effect on the people in the Cape and their relations, but the actual changes in emphasis as one administration took over from another were also received and responded to in different ways by the people of the Cape, and from the outset one can observe the potential for battles between promotive and defensive agents.

Where the DEIC had mainly been interested in getting agricultural products from the Cape for their trading activities, the British were interested in a more permanent settlement. Britain was building up a trading empire across the world and it was in their interest to control the colonies and the people who lived in the colonies. Economically, the Cape became part of Britain's trading empire. Wool farming was developed as an important source of income and a local merchant class was becoming bigger and wealthier. Along with increasing trading activity came the growth of towns, the transport system, banking and small businesses.

But as has been intimated, the British authorities during the period of transition from 1795-1815 would have been cautious not to grow deep roots. It is only after this period that the imperialist raised his head. According to

Debroey (1989: 145):

When the British took possession of the Cape Colony for the second time, in 1806, their purpose was to safeguard the seaway to India for their own ships. Colonization did not yet enter into the matter; there was no reason for it.

The new masters were faced with a difficult and many-sided task: to enlist the sympathy of the white population, which had grown from a mixture of peoples but with a strong Dutch streak; to protect the native tribes and be watchful of their interests; to prepare the emancipation of the slaves; to keep the Bantu, with the Xhosa in the van, under control; finally, to make the colony profitable to the extent that it could supply its own wants.

The British approach during the transitional period is illustrated by its approach to the major problems of the time. As far as the frontier conflicts were concerned, they certainly did give more attention to problems between the Trekkers and the African chiefdoms. Matters were already extremely sensitive, with a number of wars of dispossession fought before the arrival of the British. As a result of these wars, the Xhosa people lost their independence, freedom and land, and were forced to work for the settler farmers and trekkers.

The original actions of the British were, seemingly, motivated by a desire to restore order rather than impose a new order; to accommodate rather than to coerce and enforce their own will. As could be expected, all their actions were not perceived as such by all parties. In particular, the British approach to the slave-master relations in the frontier area was bound to create dissatisfaction among the

Boers. The main source of dissatisfaction was the so-called 'Circuit Courts' which were to investigate cases of maltreatment of slaves by the Boers on the frontier and rural areas. Equally, one could not expect the British authorities to hold neutral attitudes. The judgement made of the Boers by John Barrow, the private secretary of the first governor, Earl Macartney, is of importance since he was charged with a mediation mission in the frontier district, which brought him into contact with the colonists who lived in the most remote areas. In his writings he shows little appreciation for them. He considered them "indolent and as dirty as the huts they lived in" (Debroey, 1989: 123).

The approach of the early British regimes to the Khoikhoi, Xhosa and slave populations will be reflected upon in greater detail in section 3.3.2. For the moment it is worth noting that the initial attitude was influenced by the emerging humanitarian response against slavery. It took the ambiguous form of sympathetic paternalism combined with a legalistic approach. For instance, the first civil governor to be appointed, the Earl of Caledon (1807-1811), introduced the Proclamation of 1 November 1809, whereby the authority of Khoikhoi captains and laws was no longer recognized. They were to obey the colonial laws and to pay taxes. Although they could not own land, they needed a fixed address, and thus they had to go into service with the Boers. This facilitated forced labour and other abuses by the Boers

that, again, led to the institution of Circuit Courts supposed to investigate instances of maltreatment of slaves by their masters.

The important point from a morphogenetic point of view is that the British were new corporate agents that simply appeared on the social scene; their power over others did not emerge in the course of prior interaction. They immediately added to the complexity of the social system and their actions, even if ambiguous, posed severe challenges to existing relations. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether their actions made any significant difference to the lot of the marginal-status groups.

The first action regarding education

The early educational actions also confirm an approach indicative of not wanting to make drastic changes. Sir John Cradock was the first of the English governors who devoted serious attention to the education of the colonists. His actions constituted the main thrust of the British efforts during the transition period and it is worth looking at their success/ failure.

In 1811 the Chief Justice was requested to report on the state of education in the Colony after going on circuit. Based on his observations and on replies to circulars which Cradock sent to all the landdrosts, the School Commission

issued a report which is perhaps the first official report from an educational authority in South Africa. The state of education was reported to be bad, especially in the rural districts. The farmers were still in the habit of employing private tutors, who were usually men of little learning and intemperate habits, so that their office was held in small esteem. (Malherbe, 1925: 61)

To remedy the situation, Cradock resolved to restore the prestige of the 'profession' by re-linking it to the Church. Schools were, therefore, established in the bigger towns of the Colony. The schoolmaster was to be the Church Clerk, who had to proceed to Cape Town first in order to be interviewed and evaluated before he assumed his duties. He received an annual grant of 60 pounds from the Government, a plot of land and half the school fees. These schools were known as "Koster Scholen". A local body, usually the Kerkraad, exercised immediate supervision over these schools, but it was controlled by a School Commission (later renamed the Bible and School Commission) under the ultimate authority of the Colonial Government, who furnished the greater part of the teachers' salaries. The other part was the small amount accruing from school fees.

Despite the apparently good intentions, these schools were doomed to fail, since they failed to meet the needs of the people who still preferred to engage their own teachers. There were other reasons for their retrogression. Malherbe

(1925: 63) points out that the Committee had almost unlimited means at its disposal from the public treasury to make a success of education, but that it was hamstrung by the "constitution of its powers":

In the first place, it had no authority to visit or inspect the schools had no responsible executive head .. and perhaps the most important reason lay in the attitude ... of the Government towards education.

and then he adds an important reason for the failure of education:

The schools were to be the chief instruments by which to anglicize the inhabitants (also on p.63).

Education became an instrument for the purposes of a narrowly defined objective. In pursuit of this objective, the style and approach of the first governor after 1815 inclined him to take matters into his own hands. Many sources describe Lord Charles Somerset as a despot and an autocratic man. He imported English teachers and appointed them in the English Free Schools established in the major towns, without the Commission having any say in the matter. The Governor appointed and paid the teachers of these schools. The Bible and School Commission had no authority in these schools and neither in higher education, for the South African College (later University of Cape Town) which was founded in 1829, had its own Council of seventeen directors, of whom two were appointed by the Governor and the remainder elected by the shareholders. Already in 1816 the Bible and School Commission reported that they were

poorly attended and very inefficient. (Malherbe, 1925: 64)

Thus, despite being congruent, in some ways, with the educational ideals of the previous time, the objectives of the authorities were not achieved because of their contradiction with the vested interests of the emergent local agents. On the other hand, the early British may not have been assertive enough in imposing the colonial will, and once a sense of permanency arrived, it came into competition with its own authority. With the Commission's constitution and interests changing gradually through ecclesiastical and religious influences, it had become a purely church body by the end of its regime in 1839. Such a body was not sufficiently in tune with the aggressive imperialism that was contained in the instructions from England and the approach of the local powers.

Preconditioning effects of British historical experience of education

As far as content and educational ideology are concerned, there is not much to elaborate on since 'educational' concerns were not based on a specific educational ideology but rather blatantly on social, political, economic and cultural concerns. Education was conspicuously devoid of educational thinking. One thing that stands out, though, was that these people were well accustomed to the prominence of the church in educational matters. Until the 1870s,

education was under the control of the Anglican church and even at the end of the nineteenth century the Anglican church still owned the majority of schools. The challenge already came in 1808, but the Anglican Church fought back throughout. At the same time, middle-class concerns about occupational utility increasingly had an impact on the nature of education (Vaughan and Archer, 1971).

3.3 Interaction : The British Social and Educational Agency and the Reactions to it

Shifting the focus now to the social and educational relations between 1815 and the 1860s, one must again ask a question about the correspondence and congruities which link the unintentional colonialist approach and the intentional imperialist colonialism of the British. This is a matter that has received some attention from historians (Peires, 1989). There appears to be no reason to question the conclusion that the final transfer of the Cape from Dutch to British rule did not in itself precipitate a revolution in government. The reformist impulses of the British and the Batavian administrations were soon submerged by the weight of established Cape practice, to the extent that by 1814 the transitional governments had simply reaffirmed the essentials of the Cape social and institutional structure as it had existed prior to 1795. Peires (1989) approaches the matter on the appropriate level of the instructions given to, and actions taken by, social actors and agents. With regard to Somerset he writes:

When Lord Charles Somerset assumed office in 1814 as governor of the Cape, there was no reason to suppose that any major transformation of the Cape society was in prospect. Certainly, Lord Charles himself was very far from wishing any changes at all.... The royal commission issued for ... Somerset's guidance upon his appointment as Governor of the Cape stated that 'for the present and until our royal wish be further signified, the temporary administration of Justice and the Peace of the Settlement should, as nearly as circumstances will permit, be exercised by you in conformity to the laws and institutions which subsisted under the Ancient Government (p.472-473).

As will soon become clear, the intention to maintain the status quo here refers to the distribution of power and the political structure. According to Peires (1989), Somerset was the highest of English High Tories whose views were coloured by a home environment which prided itself on maintaining control in order to meet the colonial objectives. Not surprisingly, he was not inclined to tamper with the existing administrative and legal systems which centralized all relevant powers in the hands of the governor.

The changed attitudes of the British to the local inhabitants

The essence of the relationship between the British authorities and the local inhabitants can hardly be appreciated without an understanding of the colonial 'paradigm' and the reactions to it.

In gaining an understanding of the nature of, and interaction in, the colonial society, it could be helpful to

consider the ideas of John Rex (in Ross, 1982) about race relations in colonial societies. He provides a valuable spectrum of the variety of social forms found in colonial situations, making us, once more, aware of the dangers of over-generalization. Yet after surveying these differences, he defines the common feature of all forms of colonialism as the dependence of the colonizer on unfree labour. This is no hidden secret but a manifest feature of colonial relations. But this distinction between free and unfree needs to be seen in an even broader sense as placing the focus only on labour. This is easier to grasp when, as Rex does, one sees the colonial society in contrast to metropolitan capitalist societies. He suggests that 'normal development' in metropolitan societies takes the form of the exploitation of a native-born internal proletariat who, while originally powerless, organize and engage in a class struggle until the point is reached in which a minimum of security and social rights is won in the Welfare State. In such a society some sort of consensus develops about the need for a mixed economy, planning for full employment and welfare rights etc.. Of course this does not solve the problem of exploitation and he refers to the development of a so-called under-class or sub-proletariat which is not adequately protected by the working-class movement. More important for our purposes here is the contrast with the colonial society in the sense that

there are always clear distinguishing marks between

colonisers or imperialists and the native people of the colony with the effect that sharp distinctions based upon appearance, history or ethnicity are drawn and the sharpness of this distinction together with the unequal distribution of power prevents the emergence of effective class struggle and the creation of a Welfare State (Rex, 1982: 200).

One could debate about the position of, for instance, English-born, Asians and blacks in England who are equally well distinguishable. But the general point being made and the implications thereof are what is important - colonial societies typically reflect a stratification system which is relatively more clear-cut, which makes it particularly difficult for the colonized to negotiate their way towards setting minimum rules for social conduct and social security. The fuller implication of Rex's ideas is that the basis for some minimum social consensus is relatively absent, not only owing to the clarity and sharpness of social distinctions, but also to the particularly one-sided nature of colonial relations. In the metropolitan society, social structures emerge directly from interaction between the exploiter and exploited which suggests some degree of reciprocity. This occurs to a much smaller degree in the colonial society. Even though the colonizer is dependent on the labour of the colonized, his power in local relations is enhanced by the source thereof : since the colonial power gets its power from "the Crown", an external source, and not from achieving ascendancy in internal relations, it is conditioned to assume its right to govern and to use force and does not engage in 'social labours' to earn it. Thus,

the colonizer does not become particularly affected by the consideration of the interests of 'the other' in the interaction situation - and therefore sets his social objectives outside the context of local interaction and proceeds to act as if 'the other' does not exist or the existence of the other is irrelevant. Of course, this means that the colonial authority has an inevitable legitimacy crisis, but at the same time a freer hand to introduce what it wants into the social arena.

Yet, and this needs to be emphasized, this does not mean that the colonized does not feature in the process of 'moulding' the society and that the colonizer simply gets what he wants. The colonized enters the social arena through other means, such as through the consideration of his interests as relevant alternatives or competition or through not playing according to the rules of the colonizer. After all, he needs to act in fulfillment of the objectives and expectations of the colonizer - colonizers should act as colonizers and the colonized should act like colonized people for the colonial context to determine colonial outcomes. More subtly stated, on the intentional level, colonizers may be relatively unaffected by 'the other' but morphogenetically they do not escape the implications of their actions and the social weight of the other - despite the imposed silence. Concretely, the history of colonization has shown the empirical frequency of how

colonization, in its effort to stamp out, repress and distort local cultures, effectively provides a major impetus for nationalistic assertion - it spawns its own antithesis in the form of nationalistic movements whereby the exploited and ignored primary agents eventually become an assertive corporate agent seeking self-determination more than anything else. This could happen despite the power of the colonizer. William Pomeroy (in Van Diepen, 1988: 20) is worth quoting on this matter:

It was, however, precisely the methods and tactics of the colonial power that produced the opposite of its intentions. In Algeria, the consequence of the all-pervading oppression by the French was the inculcation of a fierce nationalism.

He goes on to point out that this nationalism should not be seen as the same as its European counterpart:

The nationalism that was produced there and in many other colonies, however, was not necessarily of the bourgeois type: the repression of the population provoked an anti-foreign or anti-imperialist reaction from feudal landlords and tribal chiefs as well as the educated strata (also on p. 20).

3.3.1 Education for Anglicization

Taking the debate back to the Cape Colony in the 1800s, one could argue that, despite the intentions of retaining the essential features of a centralized administration which are in any case congruent with the general colonial paradigm, the British authorities were highly ambitious about transforming the social character of the Cape. Lord Charles Somerset, in particular, saw it as his duty to anglicize the

colonists as soon as possible. He declared:

They were only a little over thirty thousand in number, and it seemed absurd that such a small body of people should be permitted to perpetuate ideas and customs that were not English in a country that had become part of the British Empire (Theal as cited in Malherbe, 1925: 57).

In the drive to anglicize all public spheres of life, a number of strong steps were taken. Despite the fact that only one in eight of the inhabitants (including the 5 000 English immigrants who were imported in 1820 to anglicize the frontier area) could speak English, it was considered advisable to suppress Dutch as an official language. Notices were issued that no one who did not understand the English language would be appointed to any post in the Civil Service. In 1822 Somerset issued a proclamation whereby all official documents and all proceedings of the courts of law would be conducted in English. Vacant pulpits of the Dutch Reformed Church were filled by young clergymen from Scotland and teachers were imported (also from Scotland) to start free English Schools.

The reaction to these steps

As could be expected, these steps generated hostility and opposition among those at whom they were aimed. Some of these steps failed for more subtle reasons than direct opposition. For instance, it happened that the Scottish clergymen mostly married Dutch-speaking women and became well assimilated into the emerging Afrikaner nation. To

quote Innes :

Almost without exception these were men of high ability and great zeal. The influence that they had with the people was due to the fact that they very soon adapted themselves to the ways and language of the colonists....Names like Murray, Robertson, Fraser, McGregor, etc., have become household words among the Dutch-speaking people (in Malherbe, 1925: 58)

Instead of becoming agents of the British anglicization project, they became major actors in the church-led rebellion against it.

But direct opposition was also not slow in forthcoming. In particular, the frontier farmers reacted with hostility to the approach of the regime. Their reaction against anglicization combined with their reaction to the efforts by the British to moderate their relations with slaves and the frontier Xhosa and the eventual emancipation of the slaves (See Debroey, 1989: 163). As a form of resistance the reaction of the frontier boer was to start the so-called Great Trek, which took the form of Dutch-speaking Boers banding together to trek further into the interior away from the control of the authorities, with the intention of establishing their own territories (Debroey, 1989: 165-8 and 171-84).

It remains significant that the Boer response was launched from outside the legal and social territory effectively controlled by the colonists. It is worth asking whether overt opposition would have come so rapidly if they had had

to cope with the constraints that would have existed in closer social proximity to the dominant group.

The anglicization of education also encountered direct opposition. As a means of altering the language of the greater body of Europeans in the country, the steps taken were an utter failure (see for instance Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 479-80). They operated in the opposite direction, according to Malherbe (1925: 58)

... hundreds of parents who otherwise would have had their children taught in English now refused to do so, and the total number of children attending schools decreased considerably

This tendency is confirmed by the available statistics. In the Government schools at Cape Town there were, in 1828, 675 pupils. But, with the exclusion of the Dutch language, the attendance in a few years sank to below 300. In 1839 the united attendance was a mere 84.

One needs to make a differentiation between the approach of the Regime to the education of, on the one hand, the colonists - for them they had in mind anglicization and they placed a high premium on this objective, made a considerable effort and there were considerable consequences. On the other hand, there was their approach to blacks, slaves and Khoikhoi - for them they had in mind the pacification of frontier blacks by means of work-skills-related education. In the case of the latter they had a specific approach but

preferred to leave education matters to missionaries.

The aim, in this study, is to investigate both the above, but more space will be given to the first because the latter unfolds only outside the parameters of this study in terms of time and geography. Yet it is so crucial in the bigger scheme that it will be explored.

There can be little doubt that the British authorities saw the anglicization process in a very serious light, but it was not a primary concern from the start. As early as 1809 there are indications of support for the process, but it was not approached with sufficient vigour to make a difference. General Colin wrote in 1809:

Import English teachers and the next generation will be Englishmen (Cited in Malherbe, 1925: 57).

The steps by Caledon, Grey and Cradock were mild and cautious (Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 348). It was only later, during the regime of Lord Charles Somerset (1814-1826) that anglicization became an integral part of the British policy.

Goulburn wrote to Somerset in 1821:

All schools in the colony ought to be conducted by English masters (Cited in Malherbe, 1925: 57).

As was to be expected, the effect of the policy was the

increase in numbers of private schools, most of which were Dutch schools. While there were never more than 28 English Government Schools during the years from 1830 to 1839, the private schools increased from 39 in 1830 to 94 in 1839. Some of these private schools became excellent institutions, as was the 'Academy' in Cape Town, managed by Pringle and Fairbairn. They also owned the '**Commercial Advertiser**', the first newspaper in South Africa, in which they frequently expressed their criticism of Somerset's despotism. As a result the school was closed. The Governor was demonstrably unfriendly to the private schools and arranged for the appointment of people to start 'oppositional schools'. Despite failure at the time, the outcome of the interaction between the despotic Somerset and the local inhabitants led to a pattern that was to stay a feature of South African education up to the present day. Besides the racial division, the break away from state schools has retarded the process of cultural integration between Afrikaner and English-speaking whites, facilitating a system of separate Afrikaans and English schools as the general pattern throughout the country.

But Somerset and the Colonial authorities were determined to use education as an instrument for social transformation. The next step was to 'systematize' and centralize educational operation to ensure greater effectiveness and control.

The introduction of a 'state system': The efforts to further the anglicization programme and co-ordinate local educational arrangements are of significance from a number of angles. As demonstrated by Archer in her study of West European cases, a state system can be expected to emerge from a situation where various competitors in the educational sphere have arrived at a point where further competition undermines the operations and erodes the resources of even the stronger agents. The opting for the establishment of a state system is then the result of a compromise and a realization that a stalemate has arrived. As pointed out by Archer (1984: 68), the situation in mid 19th century England was typically a situation in which rivalry between competing educationally interested agents tended to paralyze the activities of all parties:

From this situation of stalemate, pressures develop which culminate in the integration of education to the state. Each of the competitive parties seeks to break out of the deadlock and this can only be done in one of two ways - by obtaining considerable new resources or by acquiring legal constraints to use against competitors. It is obvious that the central government is the only source of the latter, but less self-evident perhaps is that also the greatest untapped supply of wealth for educational purposes.

The point being made by Archer here is that all parties are negatively affected by the state of affairs, and that the move towards a state educational system does not originate from the goals of either the dominant or the assertive group:

It is the eventual and unintended product of all of them

seeking state intervention for their own ends simultaneously (also on p.68).

This is where the major difference from the colonial society comes in. Where such a 'call' on state intervention in 'typical European situations' resulted from the complexities of interaction between competing groups, it is argued in this study and confirmed by other observations of closed societies like the colonial situation, that change emerged less from reciprocal interaction and far more from coercive imposition by the dominant agent. There are three basic reasons for this: Firstly, the local colonial regime is more concerned with and integrated into the metropolitan society than into the local social unit, and thus responds more to the externally derived goals of the Colonial Authority than the internally generated dynamics. Secondly, the power-imbalance in the typical colonial situation results from the colonial regime acquiring its power from the potent external source which provides it with the right to govern regardless of the local power dynamics. Finally, the typical cultural chauvinism of the colonizers conditions over-assertion / arrogance / high-handed high-powered actions which do not make for much reciprocity, and the imposition of measures and structures without concern given to local needs and sentiments. As a consequence, reciprocal interaction as a mechanism / source of change becomes less significant.

With the introduction of a Department of Education in the Cape Colony in 1838, the dominant agent was in an

expansionist mode. The Colonial authorities were clear in their minds about their objectives: they wanted to incorporate the Cape into their Empire and were unlikely to 'await'/anticipate local interaction to determine the timing of their action. The introduction of the Department of Education was not a compromise arrived at by negotiation in a stalemate caused by prior interaction, but it was part of the elaboration of the dominant agent's one-sided expansionist project. Of course, all participants did not see it in that fashion, for instance the crucial actors within the educational realm like Herschel, Bell, Fairbairn and Innes were seemingly more concerned about getting education in order, than the intentions of political actors. For instance Somerset saw in this process of systemization an opportunity to pursue the anglicization project. There is, in fact, some evidence of underlying clashes of interests within the ruling colonial community, between those who were motivated by educational objectives and those who were motivated by political objectives. These will be discussed further on. But even accepting this difference of interests within the dominant group regarding education, none of them were about to define the desired nature of educational arrangements in such a fashion that they would become significantly influenced by the interests of the colonized other in the interaction situation.

In what follows, some general background information will be

provided, in order to illustrate the greater impact of internal dynamics compared with external conditioning in the decision to introduce a 'state educational system'.

The sequence of events that played off during this time is a very good illustration of the contradictory effects of colonial relations, and will later be utilized to gain further insight into more contemporary events in so far as there are similarities between the colonial and the apartheid society.

Pre-conditioning effect of external factors on actions of colonial agents: As already suggested, the local authorities were conditioned, at least to an extent, by external circumstances. The social forces at work in England were particularly powerful and dramatic during this time. Europe, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, was undergoing transformative changes. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution a new spirit, the optimistic, progressive, liberalism of the new industrial class was on the rise. Following the First Reform Bill of 1832 in England, the franchise was extended to the middle-class and, it is argued, a violent class revolution was staved off and the working class left 'betrayed'. Along with the rise of the middle class emerged the educated expert, the professional and the utilitarian who sought material progress through science and the rationalization of society. In particular,

they desired an end to church control over civil matters like education. It was also in circumstances like these that we see the first moves towards state involvement in education (Vaughan and Archer, 1971).

Of course, English educational history around the 1830s is much more complex, as is clear from the work of Archer (1979), but the features pointed out above are the ones which could have had a significant influence on local events in the sense that they could have provided a model for local actors. For instance, it did not take very long before the local authorities, in their fear of the hostility of local peoples, realized that a limited extension of the franchise could serve as a means of defusing the revolutionary dynamic (see Marks and Trapido, 1985). In the same fashion as introducing 'European' measures like indirect rule, education as a tool for cultural hegemony became attractive in the face of the failure of direct coercive strategies to control and incorporate the colonized peoples.

One would expect to find such a causal relationship between events in England and many actions of the Colonial Authorities, thereby providing substance against morphogenetic arguments that would point, rather, to the emergence of structures in the context of local relations. Admittedly, one finds indications of a correspondence between educational initiatives at the Cape and the events

in England in the sense of growing, albeit subdued, opposition to church social monopoly, awareness of the utilitarian value of education, notions of occupational separation of the teachers from the church, professionalization and then the systematization of education as a sphere to be controlled by professional educationists.

But the items pointed out above are not enough to suggest that all structural developments were determined by the events in the centre of the colonial empire. This would deny the important contribution of morphogenetic dynamics. If one were following the trend pointed out above, it would mean that the efforts of the authorities in the 1830s to introduce a 'state system' would simply be traceable back to developments in England. In support of the morphogenetic argument, it turns out that this is not the case and that, instead, efforts to introduce a state education system in 1838 are to be understood as a product of colonial aims and the local situation, and not an imitation of the 'home' example.

Until the 1870s, educational establishments in England were organized on a voluntary basis, i.e. the whole range was outside state intervention. The notion of a state system in the Cape Colony in 1838 was well ahead of any acceptance of the idea in England itself. Malherbe (1925) surveyed the

developments at the time in England, Prussia, Holland etc. and found that only developments in Prussia could have played a role in influencing the local thinkers, and Archer's work (1979) suggests that only France would have supplied a model at this time but confirms that South African developments in this regard were well ahead of events in Britain.

To gain insight into the ideas underlying the introduction and modification of the English and other ideas about the systematization of education, one should explore the ideas leading to the introduction of the new system at the Cape Colony in 1838. Credit for this initiative should go to a number of individuals: Bell, Herschel, Fairbairn and Rose-Innes. They were, mostly, products of the liberalism prevailing in England at the time, as shown in their concern with, for instance, professionalism, secularism in education and the separation of education from the church.

The work of Malherbe (1925) stands out as the most informative source. Most of the material that follows is restricted to this source and a limited number of other sources. The objective is not to present 'the history of the period' but to illustrate a theoretical point.

The first official mention of a state system, run by a powerful head, is to be found in the memorandum (dated

August, 1837) drawn up by Colonel Bell, then secretary of the Colony. He presented his ideas for comment to Sir John Herschel, an eminent English astronomer who spent time at the Cape doing astronomical surveys. Bell concluded his memorandum with the observation that to ensure the proper working of the system what was required was

The appointment of a sound, clear-headed man, either not belonging to the ministry, or so untinctured with prejudice in favour of this or that form of Christian Protestant Faith, as to constitute him an impartial Director General of Public Education in this Colony (in Malherbe, 1925: 76).

Despite the half-hearted preference given to the Protestant faith, the interesting aspect of these words is the significance attached to 'professional autonomy', but it must be noted that it is independence from the church which is sought for, not from the state. Herschel (17 February, 1838) replied positively and emphasized the notion that the furtherance of education was one of the duties of the state, and to that end it was the responsibility of the state to launch a system of schooling. Among his remarks is also the following suggestion calling for extraordinary centralization of powers :

An essential character of a well-organized system is the direct responsibility of every member of it to a recognized official superior, and ultimately, to a central opinion and power, acting on consistent principles, and calling for constant information on every point of practical detail. The shorter the chain the more perfect the organization, and for the purpose in question I agree entirely with the concluding suggestions of the "Memorandum", that the central responsibility should be lodged in one individual. A board of Educational Commissioners in a community like this must, from the very nature of the thing, be either a constant scene of

dispute or a body in which some prominent member suggests and acts for all, while the responsibility of his measures is divided among the number (in Malherbe, 1925: 76).

He believed that the first step in the execution of this system must be the improvement of the status of the teacher. Government support should be specially liberal with regard to teachers' salaries. He discounted a contradictory scheme of Bell to make the teaching profession a stepping stone to the ministry - a device for enhancing the prestige of teachers (See John Cradock's similar ideas):

To make the profession of Education respectable it must be made an independent profession; one within the pale of which an ample reward may be found, and without quitting which proficiency may be followed by promotion (p.61).

In a following letter of 6 March 1838 entitled 'Further considerations on the working of the Government Free Schools', he lays down the general aims of education which were later incorporated verbatim into the subsequent Government Memorandum on Education (23 May, 1839).

According to Herschel the Aims of Education are as follows:-

(a) To form in the individual advantageous personal habits. (b) To restore the mind with useful knowledge and practical maxims, available for the demands of life. (c) To enlarge the powers and the capacities of the mind, and to elevate his propensities by familiarising him with truths connected and serious thought, and with high examples for moral and intellectual conduct. (d) To form good citizens and men by instructing them in the relations of social and civil life; and to fit them for a higher state of existence, by teaching them those which connect them with their Maker and Redeemer (in Malherbe, 1925: 77).

And, presumably referring to religious instruction, a concession that one would guess was made to accommodate the old order conditioned by years of church monopoly, an item

was included which made for the contradiction between these aims and the aims of the Colonial Government in terms of the language issue:

This, the most important business of the teacher, must commence with early youth, and therefore, necessarily, in the language which is vernacular, not in that which is acquired (Malherbe, 1925: 84).

The superintendent, Innes, himself later acknowledged the importance of teaching in the mother-tongue.

For, however important the diffusion of the English language through the district of the colony is justly acknowledged to be, on many and obvious grounds, there is another object in the educational institutions of this country to which this is secondary (also on p. 84)

Another important contributor to the debate that preceded the Government statement, was John Fairbairn. Fairbairn had already made himself unpopular with the powers that be and this is, probably, why his substantial contribution to formulating the duties of the superintendent, is not recognized in the final outline as accepted by the government.

While there are indications of correspondence between educational experiences at the Cape and events in England, it still remained for local actors to act on the basis of the situational logic of the time and place. The idea of a 'state education system' emerged in the local situation as a strategic option in the minds of the dominant group in a context with its particular features of relatively autonomous authorities who faced a relatively

'underdeveloped' opposition in the educational sphere. Predictably, we see that the features of the local situation allowed them to introduce a version of a 'state education system' which differed significantly from the later English system: it was essentially still a privately owned, highly controlled and even more authoritarian system. After all, it was not introduced with the aim of compromise, but expansion by means of cultural transformation (hearts and minds). The outstanding feature of the local system and major difference from other cases was its high degree of centralization and the appointment of an omnipotent chief executive. The notion of the appointment of an all-powerful executive chief, indeed, appears to be more of a local innovation than the result of conditioning by 'home' or other experience of existing systems. More important is that the colonial circumstances conditioned the possibility of such an innovation.

By conditioning is not meant simple causal determination. The structure / agency relationship reflects a particular paradox. Against the background of external factors one needs to point to the local circumstances which militated against the introduction of a 'state system'. But these were overpowered by the desire of the colonial authorities to control. The effort to introduce a state system was clearly more of a political exercise than one that emerged from relations focused on the educational sphere. From all

accounts, it is clear that the circumstances were all but favourable, and any agent sensitive to the dynamics of relations and the pragmatic possibilities of achieving the ends that it desired, would probably not have proceeded. Thus, to put it differently, the situational logic appears to militate against the step, that is if one ignores the fact that this was a colonial situation and that the dominant agent was one characterized by the degree of arrogance typically associated with a colonial authority. If one were to look at it in any situation of interaction where the different participants actually observe and are influenced by the reaction of the others, the step would have been inconceivable. This situation was different: even though there were many factors present that clearly contradicted the idea, the authorities nevertheless went ahead. Malherbe (1925: 71-2) makes it clear:

In spite of the need for a thorough-going state system that an anglicizing policy would demand in order to gain its object, there were other, fairly strong, opposing factors which counteracted such centralization. The chief seem to be:-

- (a) That education as a State function had not yet been conceived of in England, and in several other European societies, and was, therefore, still an unfamiliar conception in South Africa.
- (b) The [relative] power of the church as a supervising body in South Africa.
- (c) The sparseness of the population, and hence the continuance of many private (itinerant) schoolmasters. This practice tended to emphasize the responsibility of the family as against the State in the education of the child. Also the fact that "State" and "Government" were usually associated with everything English and anti-Dutch strengthening the anti-state attitude.
- (d) The practice of giving voluntary contributions for educational purposes which emphasized the charitable rather than the National aspect of education.
- (e) Lastly, perhaps the most immediate cause was the

scarcity of competent teachers to carry out such a system.

Despite all the odds, the British authorities were determined to achieve cultural hegemony and proceeded with the plan. In 1839, James Rose-Innes, who had been a professor in mathematics at the South African College and a former teacher, was appointed by the Government as 'General Superintendent of Public Education. His duties were manifold and comparatively specific in definition. He was to be general inspector, registrar, representative of education for the Government, 'curriculum maker', 'leader of teachers'. (Government Memorandum of 23 May, 1839) This meant extraordinarily extensive powers centralized in the hands of the Superintendent. Now this did not correspond with the English example, and one can speculate that it could be explained by the overly optimistic belief by the followers of Herschel that the professional / expert / scientist could solve all problems and there was no need for decentralized and more democratic decision-making. On the other hand, and even more likely, one could also see the tendency to over-centralize as conditioned by the colonial circumstances. The government of the moment was inclined to take matters into its own hands and it could exploit the freedom that it had in imposing its will, rather than negotiating with diverse agents.

The state accepted these aims outlined above, except for the predictable addition of one more aim, namely, to acquire a

"correct knowledge of the English language" and an arrangement which prevented the total exclusion of religious instruction from the curriculum. Thus the system was implemented with the modifications that fitted with the governments's anglicization programme and gave only mild recognition to the existing social forces. In terms of the morphogenetic logic, it was set for a future of challenge and resistance!

Other features of the new system: division of schools into two classes. First Class or Principal Schools in the larger centres which included elementary and secondary education in one building and Second Class schools in the smaller centres, which offered only primary education. In the Primary schools the following subjects were taught: reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Dutch, geography, outlines of history, physical science and religious instruction. Secondary education added Latin, Greek, French, mathematics, surveying, physical geography and the outlines of geology. Primary education was free and a fee of four pounds per annum was charged in the case of secondary schools.

The point of **theoretical significance** is that the introduction of the system was in itself a unilateral decision taken without consultation with those affected. The content, particularly with regard to the medium of instruction, was also determined by an unopposed government

which was clearly willing to impose its will, and not the result of consultation or compromise to accommodate diverse interests. And the powers of the chief executive, which were disproportionate to the metropolitan example, must be seen as deriving from the excessive political space assumed by a colonial regime. Important features of the system were conditioned by the external factors, but internal dynamics allowed a version which was less likely to emerge, did the innovation come about as a result of more reciprocal interaction.

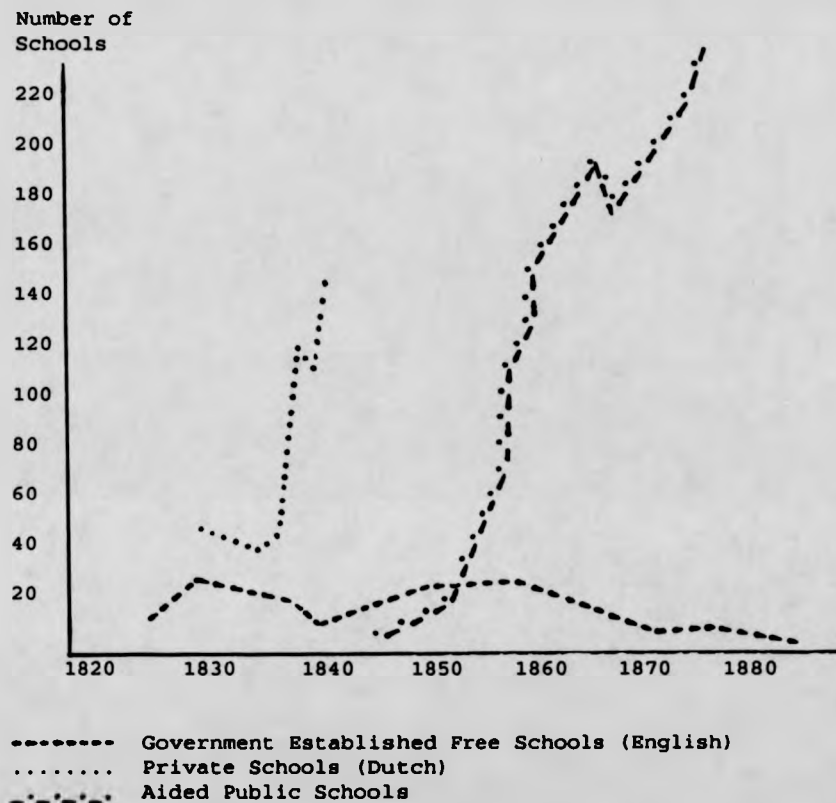
Success and failure: The 'systematization' of education brought some obvious progress. A few factors worked to its advantage: the schools were free (at least as far as primary education) and Rose-Innes was widely accepted and well liked. The calibre of teachers was considerably improved by the selection made by the superintendent of teachers from Britain. Better salaries were paid and there were signs that the prestige of the teaching 'profession' was being enhanced.

But it was conditioned to fail in terms of the stated objectives ! The failure of the anglicization project and the utilization of systematization to achieve this must be seen in the context of the well-advanced failure of the general social and political objectives of the British authorities. They had, in the case of the white colonists,

failed to appease or to coerce them into compliance. The emancipation of slaves at this time was the last straw, and in particular the disregard for the Dutch/Afrikaner language was to condition significant oppositional reaction. This ultimately culminated in the Great Trek out of the Cape Colony.

The failure of anglicization through education and the introduction of state education as a means to the same end was manifested in a number of ways. While there were some moderate advances in the town areas, the same did not apply to the rural areas, where the old type of 'meester' still had sway. Since it was quite clear that this new system was in aim nothing different from the English Free Schools introduced by Somerset, now to be carried out at the expense of the home government, the response of the Dutch-speaking colonists was the same to both. Its aim from a government point of view was still primarily the anglicization of the local inhabitants. At least it was perceived as such, and the response was predictable. As soon as the schools were introduced, more small private schools sprang up all over the country. The greater part of the white inhabitants preferred paying the total costs of education themselves, to receiving gratis education for children in schools where they were not taught in their mother-tongue (Malherbe, 1925: 80-81).

GRAPH 1 : THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT
FREE SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED BY LORD CHARLES SOMERSET
(1820-1875)



(Source: Malherbe, 1925: 82)

The really interesting aspect of these events is the unintended consequence of the over-assertion of colonial agency. The British Colonial powers succeeded in frustrating the Dutch-speaking inhabitants, but at the same time provided the motivation that enabled them to emerge from a primary agent into an 'imagined community' who's leaders

soon adopted and propagated ambitious nationalistic objectives. The efforts of the dominant agent to transform the subordinate population into British subjects failed and had just the opposite effect. The Dutch-speaking Boers developed a greater sense of solidarity in their antagonism to the British anglicization project, and were subsequently transformed into anti-colonial indigenes who saw themselves as more African than European. More specifically, as an ascendent agent, Afrikaner Nationalists gained particular impetus from the confrontation with British Colonialism.

Conclusion: Colonial powers, and agents of similar inclination, may succeed in *implementing* , that is in *introducing* blueprints and projects where others would not consider that they would be successful. Colonial agents tend not to realize the limits of their own power and equally tend to be insensitive to the needs, interests and hidden abilities of the 'other' in the social arena that they share. However, they are not guaranteed to be successful and it is not only the actions of the 'other' that affect their capacity to *proceed* with and *maintain* socially unpopular projects.

Why then did the anglicization projects fail? In many ways, the reasons for failure are just the same as for the failure of the Dutch efforts. In the first place, the relations between the relevant groups were also the typical colonial

relations characterized by domination and a desire to control the lives of others. The dominant agent is over-assertive and unconcerned with feedback. Despite the immense disparities in power, there is an almost inevitable growth in oppositional ideas and, other factors permitting, an accompanying emergence of oppositional corporate agency. Failure was also facilitated by the impact of variance internal to the dominant group, its relative lack of capacity in terms of know-how and skills to run an education project with such an ambitious objective as affecting a cultural transformation. The same applies with regard to the failure of the efforts to systematize education: the dominant agent did not have adequate role models and had to innovate beyond the realm of what the local actors were capable of. The point is that the failure of the dominant agent could not be explained with reference to a single variable and without reference to its own transformation.

The success of the British Colonial regime, if it could be described as success, is once again confined to the maintenance of socio-political dominance. There is good evidence that the colonial paradigm served as a model for the ideologues of the apartheid era. Equally, there is no denying that the divisions entrenched during the colonial period served to pre-condition future relations. Leaving aside the effects of colonial pre-conditioning on race and class relations, the division between Afrikaans and English-

speaking South Africans (a division of no mean significance throughout the subsequent years) was entrenched in the society through the separation of Afrikaans and English-speaking children in the school environment during this time.

Just as the British success and failure should be seen in the light of the constraining effect that the pre-conditioning outcome of the Dutch prior period had on the different social agents of the time, so the British period had a significant impact in pre-conditioning the options of future agents.

3.3.2 Education for Pacification

The last substantial section of this thesis ends with a brief consideration of the British approach to Xhosa, slave and Khoisan people in general and education specifically. The intention is not to present an historical overview of the events, but to extract items which will be utilized for the specific purposes of the arguments being put forward. What is confirmed in this section is, firstly, the importance of the pre-conditioning effect of the Dutch relations on the later British relations, secondly, the pattern of Europeans being successful in implementing projects and maintaining social dominance, but failing to achieve the results of the specific projects that they embarked on and, thirdly, this section again illustrates the

linkage between the failure of agency and the unintended transformation of agency.

The general approach of the colonial authorities to the indigenous inhabitants of the Cape Colony should, first of all, be understood in the context of the European heritage. The British were evidently, like all colonizing peoples, convinced of the superiority of their own culture in relation to that of the African people they encountered in the Cape Colony. Moreover, as evidenced by scholars in comparative race relations, racism was more intense in the colonies of the Dutch and the English, compared to those of the French, Portuguese or Spanish. This, they argue, had to do with the fact that the Dutch and English had moved beyond the spiritual unity of medieval Catholicism and the ordered hierarchy of feudalism in the ferment of early capitalism. In this view, Dutch and English society became transformed into one that consisted, not of a complex hierarchy of social ranks, but mainly of two classes: the respectable burghers who regarded themselves as industrious, and the poor whom they despised. In the colonies, it is argued, this bifurcation was institutionalized into a rigid two-tier society where the Europeans dominated all others and, presumably, the racial distinctions between colonizers and the colonized made this system more clear-cut than in metropolitan societies (Rex, 1982; Elphick and Giliomee, 1989; Kinloch in Farley, 1982: 188). Whether this simple

stratification system actually prevailed in England is, and will always remain, a matter of debate, but more important is that colonial societies, more than any other, tended (although not inevitably) to reflect a general social form characterized by a deep divide between colonizer and colonized (See Rex, 1982).

Despite earlier arguments about correspondence between the Dutch and the British in the Cape Colony, one must take note of significant clashes between the old (as represented by the Dutch) and the new (as represented by the British) during the early years of the British regime. In terms of eventual outcomes, the patterns consistent with the old order won out.

Initially, the British regime was characterized by new values and ideologies, namely those of liberalism, utilitarianism and humanism. According to Elphick and Giliomee (1989: 554):

Liberalism provided the rising enthusiasm in Britain for the freedom of labour, an important component in agitation for freeing the slaves and releasing the Khoisan from various forms of coercion. Utilitarianism provided some of the ideals behind the administrative revolution such as an independent judiciary to guard against arbitrary and corrupt government and an honest and professional civil service to take away powers hitherto exercised by local farmers. It was the humanitarians, speaking through the missionaries, above all Dr. John Philip, who most clearly articulated the moral equality of all people, a principle which was enshrined in Ordinance 50 of 1828.

Central to the conflict between the old order and the new

ideologies was the question of 'distinction of persons'. It was argued earlier in this text that the Cape society had been moulded since 1652 by the legal distinctions between slaves, Khoisan, Company employees and free burghers, and after the mid-eighteenth century, free blacks. After 1795 the category of Company servant disappeared, but the other four remained, differently affecting people's rights to land, free movement, to marriage, to inheritance and to justice. The new British ideologies did not question most of the inequalities endemic in this situation. Rather they challenged statutory discrimination directed against groups on the basis of ascribed categories such as race and ancestry. More fundamentally, they abhorred the legal system which underpinned statutory discrimination and which defied the universalistic values of the Enlightenment and of radical Christianity. However, very few of the reformers envisaged social, economic or political equality for blacks, Khoisan and 'Bastaards', but they did demand equal access to justice, as well as laws which made no distinction between persons. They were inclined to argue that 'these groups, though at present debased on the scale of civilization, could be raised through education and religion' (Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 555).

It is questionable whether they would really have perceived it to be in their interest to promote social transformation on the basis of a direct application of these ideas, and

whether they would have acted consistently on the basis thereof. However, what resulted from the early dynamics is that the Khoisan were deeply inspired by the reforms introduced (there are many documented cases of slaves taking their masters to court) and colonists were suddenly faced with widespread desertion among labourers and an unwillingness to work. The phenomenon which Europeans typically called 'vagrancy', was of course a profound economic threat to those who relied on slave and coerced labour. The introduction of Ordinance 50 in 1828 and the abolition of slavery in the 1830s meant a period of anxiety for Europeans, and economic dislocation. It also meant that the originally liberal agent in search of a new basis for social order was unintentionally responsible for creating just the opposite that it hoped for, i.e. a rebellious emerging agent of change.

Nevertheless, this resulted in little significant change in the social structure and life experience of the people of the Cape. Leslie Duly (1968), investigating the effects of Ordinance 50 during the 1830s, found evidence of only lukewarm action by the authorities. They apparently lacked the means of enforcing the act in its full implications; the authorities were inaccessible to most Khoisan seeking redress, and the Cape Government did little to publicize the terms of the ordinance. In reality, relatively little happened in the form of corrective action.

During the 1830s the British government, satisfied that it had resolved the 'Hottentot question,' shifted its interest to the two-stage abolition of slavery. Thereafter its willingness to intervene at the Cape waned even further. By the early 1840s it was willing to ratify a Master and Servants Ordinance (1841) which, although it was colour-blind and provided protection for labourers, imposed duties and penalties on servants, which went far to allay the masters' alarm at abolition. Nonetheless, agitation for further regulation of labour continued throughout the 1840s. The British government waived much of its right to intervene when it granted Representative Government to the Cape in 1853. One of the first acts of the new legislature was a stiffer Masters and Servants Act (1856), which Rayner (in Elphick and Giliomee, 1989) judges to have confirmed 'the habits of domination fostered under slavery, despite its nominally non-racial wording.'

Following the insights from research done by Robert Ross and others, Elphick and Giliomee (1989: 557) conclude that :

With the proclamation of Ordinance 50 and the emancipation of the slaves, the legal mould which first shaped Cape society fell away. What was revealed was a social structure which had hardened in the mould over the previous 180 years, a structure in which class and race coincided at the top and bottom of society. The judicial reforms of the 1820s and the 1830s failed to alter the social structure, in part because the European settlers, galvanized by the struggles surrounding the reforms, were determined to shore up the system of labour repression the Masters and Servants Ordinance of 1841 was notable, not only for scotching any hopes of a truly free

market in labour, but also for obliterating the distinctions that from the 1650s had made the Khoisan freer than the slaves. Thus the ordinance further simplified Cape society and enhanced the polarization of Europeans over all others.

These views summarize crucial aspects for the argument being developed in this study: the pre-structuring effects of the Dutch period, the lukewarmness of British liberalism and the 'return' to the mould after initial efforts to liberalize relations in the Colony.

The return to harsh colonial relations is manifested in the recorded action. People like Col. Graham deliberately planned to inspire the Xhosa with 'a proper degree of terror' (Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 480-481). As the century moved on, one sees a gradual transition from liberal incorporationist to a cynical segregationist approach, which eventually arrived at its conclusion with the incorporation of Social Darwinist justification for racial differentiation, and the segregationist policy as introduced in Natal.

Why did this shift in approach take place? The answer is not easy to find and, to be rigorous, it should be asked whether a real shift occurred, in so far as ideology is concerned, and if this was not simply a different strategy to achieve the same goal, namely control over the local population. A few ideas about the earlier period in order to link up with the later could shed light on the matter. It appears that

the incorporation strategy had more to it than the optimistic, liberal, assimilationist approach that it reflects on the surface: it was also a means of gaining control in a very hostile environment. The first half of the nineteenth century was a time of profound rural discontent in the Cape. Rebellion in the Kat River settlement and war on the Eastern Frontier were paralleled by the threat of insurrection in the Western Cape against the passage of new anti-squatting legislation. It was in this context that the British authorities decided to opt for political incorporation via a qualified non-racial franchise when the Cape was granted representative government in 1853. As the Governor pointed out at the time, it was part of the

... struggle to get particular classes of the lower orders into the meaning of the Act... (cited in Marks and Trapido, 1987: 4-5).

The alternative aim is also clear from the following words of William Porter, the Cape Attorney-General:

I would rather meet the Hottentot at the hustings voting for his representative than meet the Hottentot in the wilds with his gun upon his shoulder (cited in Marks and Trapido, 1987: 5).

Although initially intended for the Coloured and Dutch-speaking inhabitants of the Cape, it was, in view of the economic changes that were taking place at the Cape, also in the interests of the British to expand the franchise to Africans. Thus besides the political aspects involved, there was also a clear economic dimension. Many analysts are inclined to see this as the only real underlying motivation. Marks and Trapido (1987: 5), for instance, argue that:

The strategy was firmly rooted in the changes which took place in the Cape economy under British rule. Already by the mid-nineteenth century, the creation of a class of indigenous black peasant producers who could supply raw materials for the British merchants and constitute a growing consumer market for their goods provided the basis and necessity for such a strategy. By the late nineteenth century it was accepted as much by the Cape-Dutch as by the English-speakers Belief in the Cape franchise was accompanied by an ideological package which stressed the virtues of free wage labour, secure property rights linked to a free market in land and individual tenure, equality before the law and some notion of 'no taxation without representation'. 'Progress' and 'improvements' were the watchwords.

For white liberals, none of this contradicted their belief that the majority of blacks constituted a vast pool of labour available for their exploitation. In this they were at one with the Cape Dutch and Boers of the interior.

Cape liberalism, as it is commonly referred to, did not spread and it did not last. There seem to be a multitude of reasons. In the first place, the relative failure of liberalism in the Cape must be seen against the background of the society that the British colonists 'inherited' from the Dutch, and which they could not succeed in transforming. It was a society far removed from the ideal society foreseen by the philosophers of the Enlightenment - a society characterized by a caste-like social structure. Despite the fact that the British authorities were clearly aware of the entrenched inequalities at the time of their arrival, their actions had the eventual effect of contributing to the South African society becoming increasingly crystallized around a fairly rigid colour-class gradient developed under their control. This is curious in view of the fact that the mid-

nineteenth century was the highpoint of Victorian liberalism and the belief in 'the right of the individual' but it is also indicative of the complexity of forces at work in the local situation.

More about this later. First the thread of the story must be pulled back to black education.

Education for blacks: One finds in black education at the time a situation with the same entangled complexity of past and future. The main objective of the government was to use education as a means of creating order. The strategic detail of the approach changed and varied over time with different interpretations by different actors, but the general tendency shows a movement away from an optimistic liberal incorporationist approach by the authorities, to a conservative segregationist approach.

Throughout the period under scrutiny, the political authorities and the missionaries had an overall common interest in a cultural transformation among the African people. One finds that the themes of 'pacification', 'cultural transformation' and 'cultivation for industrious life' predominate. Even when liberal concepts are used, it is striking that they are used and defined in European terms. The notions of justice, industry, civility etc. as found in the missionary discourse on education was never

influenced by African views. Even the most philanthropic of missionaries saw themselves and acted as agents of a foreign culture.

Among the recipients of the education, the reactions also show a significant variety, while there was a general pattern of initial suspicion and resistance in response to the strategy of incorporation, which gradually changed to a growing desire for missionary education. In both cases the agents were transformed: the dominant from a manipulatively and superficially liberal agent to a more direct and coercive but more threatened force, and the primary agent, from a distinterested primary agent to a more differentiated group consisting of a new educated class. The newly educated were interested in the opportunities that education could provide, and ready to compete as a potential Corporate Agent in the social and other arenas. But once the rise of black interest in education and its full implications dawned on the white colonial authorities and settlers, they perceived it as a threat to their interests. Thus, after years of working out schemes that would lure black people into schools, the whites started expressing opposition to any education that was not directed to the incorporation of blacks into a white-dominated labour system.

With the establishment of the Department of Education in the Cape Colony in 1839, the education of black people was also

formally placed under the jurisdiction of a state department. Some degree of state control was exercised by the granting of funds, which first became available in 1841, but in the main, the schooling of black people was left to the churches and missionary societies. Although the funds of the missionaries were at times supplemented by contributions from the black communities that were served by the schools, their resources were always limited. The standard of teaching was low, minimal secondary education was offered and that usually by teacher training colleges.

Only a minute fraction of the child population received any schooling. Yet it should immediately be stated that the impact of missionary education must not be under-estimated; it did not occur through direct contact with large numbers of children, but rather through the creation of an 'elite' minority. Already in this regard we find an indication of failure - the emergence of an educated black elite was not the desired intention of the Colonial authorities. On the contrary, Langham Dale, the Superintendent-General of Education in the Cape after Rose-Innes, explained that the aid given to mission schools, insofar as they supplemented the public educational system, was :

... with a view of bringing elementary instruction within the reach of the mass of the labouring poor, especially those of coloured races (Molteno, 1984 : 49-50).

Of course, it being an elite that acquired the new education, they also threatened the existing traditional

leadership.

Molteno's (in Kalaway, 1984: 50-1) insight in this regard is worth noting. He is of the opinion that the emergence of a new elite was from the start potentially at odds with the traditional leadership. Educated blacks represented a threat and even a possible challenge to the leadership of the traditional authorities with their newly acquired knowledge.

He quotes Dale, who said that :

The Kaffirs see in the school the agency that weakens and then effaces all tribal bonds and customs. The leveling tendency of popular instruction is not consistent with their traditions, and the Chiefs specially watch the growth of schools with suspicion (p.50).

It is the disseminating role of the educated more than the direct contacts that had the significant social impact; the incorporation of a few people into the colonizer's culture and the undermining of traditional culture.

According to Molteno:

Steeped in the conqueror's ways of seeing, converted to their religion, and generally accepting the new order of things, the schooled corps could help disseminate a system of ideas, values, loyalties and authorities which were consistent with the colonists' interests and which contradicted, and helped to undermine, the framework that had given the people an independent ideological base in their struggle to retain their land and their livelihood. Even a government commission report contains discussion of how "missionaries' teachings have acted like dynamite on tribal solidarity." A division was created between Christian converts and adherents to the traditional religious beliefs. These are some of the ways in which schooling contributed to weakening the indigenous people's resistance to colonization and helped to establish them, once conquered, in their new place of subordination (p.50).

Molteno places the focus on intentions. The question

remains, however, whether they succeeded and the answer is probably that they did succeed to the extent that they damaged the traditional culture. Whether they actually succeeded to the extent that they replaced it with a new culture and simultaneously instilled social and political quietism into the minds of the Africans, is a very different matter!

Further indications of the Cape government officials' aims with education in 1848 are reflected in a letter to the missionaries, asking them:

What are the best methods to inspire in the Bantu the desire to cultivate their lands by ploughing, and to encourage them to follow industrious habits?

The letter went on to emphasize:

Too much pains cannot be taken to impress them with the necessity of wearing clothes and of the use of money, which, industriously gained, honestly obtains whatever they want. (cited in Rose and Tumner, 1975:205)

The appointment of George Grey as governor of the Cape (1854) marks a point of even more interest in the schooling of black children. It also marks the start of the turn towards a more negative approach to education. He planned to use education as the prime instrument in the subjugation of the indigenous population. It was part of the Cape regime's 'border pacification' policy that he motivated for the state subsidization of the missionaries' education efforts. In 1855 he said to Parliament:

If we leave the natives beyond our border ignorant barbarians, they will remain a race of troublesome marauders. We should try to make them a part of

ourselves, with a common faith and common interest, useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue. Therefore, I propose that we make unremitting efforts to raise the natives in Christianity and civilization, by establishing among them missions connected with industrial schools.

The natives beyond our boundary, influenced by our missionaries, instructed by our schools, benefiting from our trade, would not make wars on our frontiers (Rose and Tumner, 1975: 205).

The above statements give an idea of what the government hoped to achieve through education, but that does not mean that the government got what it wanted. An interesting question, of course, is whether the Missions played along with the game as planned by the government.

The role of the missionaries: The early German Moravian missionaries concentrated on improving the material conditions of their followers rather than on trying to influence the structure of the colonial society fitted into the social structure of the Cape Colony. This was to change drastically with the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS).

A serious study of the role of the missionaries in the Cape Colony is one that lures the scholar into the role of biographer, in the sense that the story is best told with the emphasis on the role of individuals. When putting the emphasis on 'the missionaries' as a social category, it is all too easy to assume that they played a consistent and homogeneous role, but closer scrutiny of the biographies of

particular individuals uncovers a surprising degree of variety. The discussion that follows will attempt to find trends, but at the same time puts the focus on individual actors.

The LMS was born out of the religious revival in England led by John Wesley and George Whitefield, and the humanitarian movement dominated by William Wilberforce . The new popular non-conformist religious movement aimed to cater for the 'plain people of low education' and had a solemn duty to initiate a universal mission to the heathen. The main aim of the humanitarians was to abolish the slave trade. Following the early impetus from a pamphlet written by a Baptist village pastor, William Carey, titled *An Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means of Conversion of the Heathen*, published in 1792, the colonies, and particularly Africa, became the major pre-occupation of the evangelicals. On 4 November 1794 a small group of William Carey's admirers met in a coffee house in London. The outcome was the London Missionary Society, formed

to attend the funeral of bigotry and propagate the gospel among the heathen (Mostert, 1992: 286).

True to the traditions of the new religious dissenters, it was to be of no particular religious denomination. Instead, it set out to be an umbrella organization in which it would be left to 'the minds of the persons whom God may call; to

assume for themselves such form of Church government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the word of God' (Mostert, 1992: 287). Much of the resolute reforming spirit fostered by the evangelical humanitarians, that was to roll forward from the eighteenth century into the nineteenth, was to fix upon the Cape and its eastern frontier. South Africa, as the humanitarian conscience came to see it, was a natural extension of the abolition campaign; and rapidly became the principal theatre for missionary activism (Mostert, 1992: 286-7) or radical evangelism which could be defined as:

... the belief that social and political issues were central to the concerns of a Christian (Thompson, 1990: 59).

The controversial Dr. J.T. van der Kemp, a former lieutenant in the Dutch dragoons, went to South Africa as the first LMS missionary in 1779, married a Khoikhoi woman with whom he had four children. After experiencing much suspicion from all quarters, he founded a mission, in 1803, which he called Bethelsdorp, near Algoa Bay (the modern Port Elizabeth) in the disputed eastern frontier area. Bethelsdorp was said to be 'a haven for Khoikhoi who left the white farms'. There Van der Kemp discovered and denounced the exploitation they were suffering at the hands of the white farmers and officials. He died in 1811 and his colleague, James Read, who survived him, was unable to sustain many of the charges he brought against individual farmers before the Circuit Court in 1812 (Thompson, 1990:

59).

In 1819, a far more effective and equally radical personality appeared on the scene. John Phillip, a director of the LMS, was sent to the Cape by his fellow directors to supervise the work of the mission in South Africa. Education, Christianity, and freedom from pre-industrial constraints were his recipe for welfare for all South Africans, Boers and British, slaves and Khoikhoi alike. As a radical evangelical, Philip was committed to fighting for the liberation of the oppressed classes. In a long and passionate polemic, he wrote to the Anti-Slavery Society in England, exposing the injustices experienced by the Khoikhoi:

I found them in the most oppressed condition of any people under any civilized government known to us on earth ... The hottentot has a right to a fair price for his labour; to an exemption from cruelty and oppression; to choose the place of his abode, and to enjoy the society of his children; and no one can deprive him of his rights without violating the laws of nature and of nations (in Thompson, 1990: 60).

Resulting directly from his intervention, the governor promulgated Ordinance 50 on 17 July 1828, which made the "Hottentot and other free people of colour" equal with whites before the law. As could be expected, the Ordinance met with strident protest from Afrikaners and British settlers, but it had no major effect. Yet, while the Khoikhoi and the former slaves were now freed from overtly discriminatory legislation, it did not do much to assist

them in overcoming their poverty, which was the result of the entrenched domination of the economy by the white population (Thompson, 1990: 60).

To avoid a lengthy debate about the objectives and intentions of the missionaries, I will proceed to place the focus on the educational activities of the missionaries and their outcome.

Missionary approach to education: Contrary to the wishes of the Colonial Government, education for blacks during the second half of the 18th century was characterized by growing calls by black people themselves for more academic than vocationally orientated education. In the context of widespread avoidance of 'education' and contact with 'civilization', the missionaries were not averse to providing the sort of schooling desired, so long as it brought children into their schools and thereby aided in the achievement of their stated objective, which was to evangelize. (Molteno, 1984: 53-54). As could be expected, this brought about clashes between the authorities and the missionaries. At least, one can detect signs of growing frustration experienced by the state, whose capacity to determine the nature and extent of black education in the Colony was severely restricted because of the operational control by the missions. The frustration born out of not being able to have things precisely its own way is reflected

in the following extract from a Government gazette:

It may be desirable that education of the right kind should be compulsory for the children of aborigines, but at the present moment the introduction of such compulsory provision would be inopportune. If the State cannot enforce attendance at school, it can at least define the education for which it is prepared to pay. There should be a definite regulation that one-half of the school time required of those in attendance shall be diverted to such manual training as can best be followed in the locality. The 'literary' instruction sanctioned in the native day schools should be purely elementary (Quoted in Rose and Turner, 1975: 217).

More signs of uneasiness about 'academic' education for blacks are to be found in letter to the Christian Express:

...the Native is too enthusiastic about mere book learning and far too casual with respect to the accumulation of wealth The way he frequently strips himself to meet his educational expenses is indeed admirable, but this would be quite unnecessary, were he to pay more attention to developing his means of a livelihood. It may be urged that the education he is at present receiving is not one to make money with, and there is a good deal of truth in this, but he has all along shown such a pronounced preference for the European curriculum that it has been deemed impolite to refuse him.

It was rather hoped that the craze would die a natural death. But it will take a long time for education ... entirely to eliminate from his character that conspicuous defect viz. his fondness for the royal road, in other words his idea that he is already fitted for various positions at present occupied by white men only. It is true that he is to some extent satisfied with such posts as that of teacher, interpreter, etc., but, except in a few isolated cases, for any occupation involving manual labour he is at present strongly disinclined (Quoted by Molteno, 1984: 55).

Besides the fact that the above statements give one an indication of what missionary education was made up of, there are two things that are striking about the above passages. The first is the way in which they correspond with the type of statement that was to follow in the twentieth century, particularly those of the apartheid era. Secondly,

it is clear that missionary education was not producing the outcomes desired by the dominant agent. On the contrary, the outcome of missionary education, while incorporating black people into the European culture, had the effect of empowering black people in a way not intended by the colonial authorities.

The Cape governors were generally uneasy about giving higher education to Africans. They saw Africans mainly as unskilled labourers and they did not want education to be a path to social equality for Africans. For example, this is what Langham Dale wrote in a report in 1868:

For the educated African there is no opening . He may be qualified to fill the post of a clerk, but either there is no demand for such persons, or prejudice operates against persons of colour being so employed. (Rose and Turner, 1975: 208)

In fact, there were few well-educated Africans who could take up positions as teachers, clerks, interpreters and so on. In the Cape there was also a non-racial qualified franchise. This meant that people who had certain educational qualifications and owned property were given the vote. By the end of the 1880s there were a number of middle-class Africans who qualified for the vote. These people enjoyed some economic and political rights, but generally speaking, Africans did not have much education -and they did not enjoy equal economic and political rights.

On the other hand, despite the stated intentions of the

colonial government to use education as a tool for the pacification of Africans, and regardless of whatever intention the missionaries held, the outcome of the type of education provided by the missionaries had the effect of facilitating the emergence of an educated and articulate elite . While the colonial context may have limited the capacity of the schooling to affect an individual's material prospects, it would appear to have provided at least a leadership element with certain linguistic and other cultural accoutrements, useful in articulating the grievances and demands of their people. It is doubtful that education served as a revelatory means to open people's eyes to the conditions they found themselves in and made them aware of alternatives. As it is put by Molteno (1984: 56):

No vision was needed to conjure up the latter since the experience of liberty was still fresh in people's memories. That people were clear on the former score, independent of any revelatory power which education might have been assumed to possess, was evidenced by more than a century of bitter resistance to their colonization and subjugation.

By the last quarter of the century, the tide in favour of education was fast rising. In 1874 the Kaffir Express stated that :

... the tide has set in even among the heathen Kaffirs in favour of education. Many of the mission schools are filled with the children of those who never go to church, and the real difficulty in getting hold of the children in a heathen location does not lie in the unwillingness of the parents, except in some cases in regard to their daughters, but in the natural aversion of the children to the restraint of a school, and the heathen parents cannot be got to compel them. (Quoted by Molteno, 1984: 57)

Molteno (1984) makes an interpretation which is particularly interesting. He argues that the rise in the interest in education was more to be ascribed to a transformation that occurred among the black people because of the failure of their resistance to colonial domination.

It was only as the economic basis for an independent political stand disintegrated with the dissolution of the pre-capitalist mode of production, only as people became impressed by the final failure of their resistance, only as they found their feet anew on terrain which was no longer theirs, and only as the settler authorities demonstrated their power to dictate the terms on which future negotiations might be conducted, that education began to be sought instead of shunned (p.57).

What has clearly happened is that from the defeat of resistance at the hands of an over-assertive dominant agent has emerged a corporate agent, willing and capable of pursuing its interests in competition with the dominant agent.

This case, as an example of the transformation of agency, deserves even further exploration but I think the point has been made for the purposes of this study.

3.4 Conclusions: Failure of Agency During the British Period and the Elaboration of Racial Discrimination

The transformation of the British from initial liberal humanitarians to the eventual architects of segregation provides a good illustration of the link between, on the one hand, the reciprocal relationship between agency and culture/structure, and on the other, the failure of agency.

The British liberal reaction to the cruelty of the slave system was to abolish the legal structure on which it was based, thereby empowering the former slaves to challenge the authority of their previous masters. This meant a change in the structure of social relations, which again required a modification in the actions of the original liberal agents. Failure of liberal agency, in this case, is then the unintended outcome of itself: liberals were transformed into segregationists because the results of their actions threatened their original dominance. In order to remain dominant, the British liberal project had to be jeopardized.

The emerging segregationist approach is also important to the extent that it provided the basis for later social segregation (Shepstone's system in Natal) and ultimately provided a model for apartheid.

Undoubtedly, the impact of the missionaries was profound, but there are many different interpretations thereof. The question revolves mainly around the relationship between the missionaries and the colonial conquerors in whose territories they operated. Were they autonomous agents of their own project or were they mere extensions of Western imperialism? The latter view appears to be dominant, but there are others who emphasize only the religious objectives of the missionaries. The truth is more likely to fall somewhere between the two, since the missionaries were not a

homogeneous group of people, and some were certainly genuine in their commitment to defeat bigotry and promote Christianity but, of course, that cannot be said of all. History reflects, at least, that the missionaries had frequent disagreements with the authorities. These clashes were often clashes of interest, and reflect the variance in social action deriving from diverse structural positions. More significant, though, is that the missionaries and their missions were transformed in the course of their interaction within the colonial milieu. Instead of attempting to uncover hidden motives, one should rather ask questions about the outcomes or consequences of missionary activity. My own view would be more to accept their stated intentions and proceed to inspect the interaction and outcomes. In many cases these confirmed the stated intentions, others uncovered hidden agendas and, again, in many (if not all) cases, outcomes were significantly different from what was presumably intended or desired.

The point of significance is that the missionaries, intentionally or not, aided the colonial conquest of the indigenous peoples. They may have believed that they were doing the good thing from an evangelical point of view. This, however, happened to coincide with the European cultural point of view.

Africans as primary agents and objects of manipulation by

British education and other social means, did not become the pacified servants of the British Empire, but instead utilized the self-same missionary education that was supposed to be the vehicle of their pacification for the purposes of articulating their opposition to domination. Instead of succeeding in cementing its social ascendancy, the over-assertive and manipulative actions of the dominant agent had the unintended outcome of laying the basis for the growth of an educated black elite and the eventual emergence of African Nationalism. The Government's attempt to cool out the Xhosa and others by encouraging missionary education caused cultural alienation, but at the same time gave impetus to the formation of opposition, instead of an incorporated people. An astonishing irony is that the indigenous people adopted crucial components of the European culture, applied them, in complement to their own culture, to the local conditions, and eventually became agents of the same values against the ongoing oppression of the Europeans and eventual Afrikaners. The notions of non-racial democracy propagated by the African National Congress are consistent with what democracy is believed to be in Europe.

To repeat the already stated points of theoretical significance, in both cases the agents were transformed: the dominant from a manipulatively and superficially liberal agent to a more direct and coercive but more threatened force, and the primary agent, from a disinterested primary

agent to a more differentiated group consisting of a new educated class.

The newly educated were interested, and ready to compete as a potential Corporate Agent, in the social and other arenas. Of course once the rise of black interest in education and its full implications dawned on the white colonial authorities and colonials, they realized the threat to their interests, and expressed opposition to any education that was not directed to the incorporation of blacks into a white-dominated labour system.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

The study contains conclusions throughout at the ends of the different sections, and there is no need for a detailed discussion of the conclusions reached in every case. Some more general points need to be made, though. In addition, this final section will be utilized to give an indication of the practical work that has already been stimulated by the study.

This study presented an opportunity both to explore a number of persistent theoretical issues and also to develop a base from which to study and engage in the practice of institutional change.

As a theoretical exercise, the study required, firstly, the development of a critical view of the current theory debate about the micro-macro and related issues, and secondly, the acquisition of a particularly wide-ranging theoretical orientation in order to get to the point of appreciating the complexities and potentials of the morphogenetic approach. Once the logic of the approach was understood, the application became almost obvious.

The multi-variable nature of the morphogenetic approach makes for a style of theorizing characterized by frequent qualification of statements. For instance, it is not

possible to talk about failure in general if one does not refer to the potential role of :

1. the pre-conditioning effect of structural arrangements
2. the pre-conditioning effect of ideational relations
3. the features of agents
4. the indeterminacy of interaction
5. the conditioning effect of features emerging from interaction
6. unintended consequences
7. etc. etc.

Thus the morphogenetic perspective requires (if not forces) complex thinking and also leads to a writing style which could be described as dense. The reward is gains for rigour and a knowledge of having moved beyond mere lip-service to working post positivism, reductionism and determinism.

The work of Margaret Archer has proved to be more than just another theoretical perspective. With her elaboration of the morphogenetic perspective, she provides a framework that can be used in many fruitful ways without forcing one into ideological choices. The morphogenetic perspective could appropriately be seen as a device or a tool for systematic analysis, useful for theorists of diverse ideological persuasions. As an analytical approach, the morphogenetic perspective will compel them to think beyond ideological

preferences, but still allow them the space to introduce their own substance. What is refreshing about Archer's work is that it dares to be conventional, that it accepts the challenges of rigorous, but unspectacular, systematic analysis and nevertheless achieves remarkable results.

The particular value of the morphogenetic perspective derives from its approach to untangling the contextual and the agential through temporal sequencing. The sequencing, itself, is what makes it so practical and usable. The analytical exercise of sequencing context, interaction and outcome in time is almost too logical for its value to be admitted by social scientists, who often feel compelled to introduce unnecessary complexities in their theorizing.

The main theoretical insight of the study concerns the way in which the success and failure of agency are inextricably bound up with a variety of systemic variables. The failure of agency, as conditioned by features of the cultural system, the structural features of institutional complex and features of agents, have all been spelled out in this study. The most valuable theoretical insight comes in the form of the implications of the double transformation or morphogenesis that occurs in both the contextual and the agential facets of social reality. To put it in simple terms: groups in pursuit of the achievement of their collective goals act in a social environment which

is changed because of their actions; the changes involve among other things changes in the other people who act in the same context; very often these changes are in the form of the acquisition of greater capacity to oppose the actions of the original group. This means that, even though a group may succeed in imposing its will on others, others may eventually become capable of contributing to the failure of the original agent. Moreover, as groups interact with one another, in whatever form, they have an effect on one another. This means that all participants change over time. As illustrated in this study, **even** the most powerful groups, acting under the most favourable circumstances for their success, eventually fail because they cannot control all the social forces that impact on the interaction situation. The irony is that the more self-centred and monopolistic groups tends to generate more specific opposition to their own actions because of the clarity of the contradiction which often exist between the ideas and positions held by them and those who are disadvantaged by the outcome of the interaction. Therefore, failure in terms of **original** objectives is almost certain once the disadvantaged have acquired the vital necessities (numbers, organization and counter ideology). But failure also emerges from many other more subtle interaction sources. The most interesting of these is the qualitative transformation which occurs in agents because of their interaction with others. Survival in the social arena often requires the abandonment

of original ideological goals for strategic reasons and accounts for instances of failure.

Important insights were gained from the application of the morphogenetic perspective to the history of education in the Cape Colony, and earlier (i.e. the pre-colonial period). Regarding the pre-colonial period, this study provides insight into, and conceptualizes, the relevance of the pre-colonial institutional conditions in relation to later events. Specifically, in relation to education, the study exposes the inherent contradictions between the learning experience in pre-colonial society and the formal education imposed during that period. This discrepancy is explored to understand the avoidance of education by local and slave children during the Colonial era.

The study provides insights into the differences and similarities between pre-colonial forms of life and others. The 'pre-colonial society' is described as an idealtype, characterized by reciprocal interaction. The effects of this type of interaction were to integrate society in the sense of ensuring relative correspondence between social structure and human needs across the social spectrum. As an idealtype, the pre-colonial society provides a comparative case useful to understand the crises of legitimacy that pervade modern society.

The study of events during the period of the Dutch regime challenges the sociologist to see the actions of the authorities in context. The morphogenetic perspective is particularly useful in so far as it places the Dutch efforts in the context of the pre-conditioning of European experience and the specifically commercial objectives of the DEIC. The failure of the Dutch to achieve their initial objectives of gaining control over the slave and local population through education, and to ensure socio-cultural unity in its own ranks can be ascribed to a variety of factors, but the reason for failure highlighted in this study, is that the original temporary visitors acquired long-term vested interests and that the original objectives became redundant.

The British period can be described as consisting of two phases. Looking at it from a broader historical perspective, one could argue that the initial phase, characterized by optimistic assimilationist rhetoric, stood out as a period in contradiction to the rest of South African history. This period, conditioned by the liberalism prevailing in Europe, is characterized by efforts to modernize the society, but the systemic pre-conditioning of earlier relations contradicted and constrained the actors of the time. The impact of these contextual features illustrates the role of structure in constraining agency, but the colonial relations also facilitated a degree of arrogance on the side of the

dominant agent that explains why they embarked on action which might not have been contemplated in another situation. These same events, then, also illustrate the significance of the relative autonomy of agency. The efforts to introduce a state education system against the situational logic of the moment illustrate the fact that, regardless of the stringency of structural constraints, agents can act in deviance thereof. To complicate the interplay between context and agency, the British efforts to anglicize the Colony through the introduction of a state education system failed because they could not undo the grip of social and structural relations that had emerged from earlier interaction. Nevertheless, failure cannot be explained without reference to the correspondence between the interests of the Dutch and the British authorities, and the similarity of action which appeared to be different on the surface.

However, it is again the link between the failure of agency and the transformation of agency which forms the focus of the discussion about the British period. The transformation of both the dominant and the primary, and particularly their entangledness, provides the basis for the explanation of the failure of agency. In essence, the transformation of the primary agent into a corporate agent, and the simultaneous transformation of the dominant agent from being interested in assimilation to being interested in segregation, lies at

the core of the process.

The section on the British 'Education for Pacification' provides another illustration of the contradictory outcome facilitated by the morphogenetic dynamic contained in social interaction. The British authorities hoped to use education for a rather specific political purpose but they made a contribution to an almost opposite political outcome. Exposure to missionary education was supposed to 'cool out' and pacify the black people, instead, it laid the foundation from which opposition to the racial policies of future regimes would be led by a small but well-educated elite.

An unexplored feature of the study is the conditioning effect of the outcome of interaction in the Colonial period on future interaction. The interaction of consecutive periods served to confirm a pattern whereby social power became cumulatively concentrated in the hands of the whites/Europeans. The extent to which the events of this period served as an example and role model for the ideologues of the apartheid period is worth exploring. Equally worth exploring is the similarity between the Colonial scenario and Apartheid conditions: both are characterized by the relative absence of reciprocal interaction, an over-assertive dominant agency which is unwilling to compromise, and monopolistic institutional relations. In both cases the morphogenetic logic spells out

a future of eventual failure as deriving from the above features.

Is there a moral to the story? Someone has called compromise one of the greatest human inventions. This study confirms, in general, that no social agent can ever be certain of success. But what is sure to diminish the chances of success of an agent, is a style of interaction which is devoid of willingness to compromise and be influenced by 'the other'. The irony that is pointed out by using an 'extreme' example of a particularly powerful dominant agent like a colonial authority, is that **even** such a powerful agent cannot escape the morphogenetic dynamics/logic inherent in social relations.

By the morphogenetic logic is meant that, while there are obvious reasons why human beings have the capacity to act in deviance of contextual constraints, social agency could not be seen as creating or recreating social reality in every moment in time. Instead, social actors, and particularly social agents, as agents of collective interests or ideas, mostly act in terms of a logic or a pattern which can be described as the logic of the situation as perceived by people as members of collectivities positioned in relation to one another and to social resources. These actions are informed by the conditioning effects of the patterns of action emerging from past interaction. The morphogenetic

logic is concerned with the features of the situation as a moment in time, but it is never an isolated moment. In other words, the features of a situation derive from the outcome of the past but every new situation still has its potential for novelty because the people who enter the situation are not determined by the past but only 'conditioned'. To be conditioned means that one would be inclined to act in ways which have been effective in the past or can be associated with past efficiency.

On the basis of such assumptions about social agency the question of the success/failure of agency inevitably becomes complicated. **Success in morphogenetic terms** should be understood in terms of the relationship between the outcome of action and time. Powerful and narrowly self-serving agents often succeed in the conflict or struggle of the moment but fail in the longer run because of transformations which emerge from interaction over time. In the process of 'emergence', contextual and agential features become transformed in spite of the power of the participants over one another. Most of these changes are unintended and are therefore not foreseeable, let alone controllable. Thus, success must inevitably be seen in terms of a 'morphogenetic time-frame' whereby the long-term outcome of interaction can be accounted for. Success which results from coercive imposition must, ultimately, be balanced out against the actions of those who may have been defeated at the time of

the first battle but who very often acquire the capacity to act with greater efficiency in pursuit of their own objectives over time.

More subtle, but equally important, is the role of changes over time in the features of the originally victorious agent, which derive from interaction with others. Successful agents who ignore the morphogenetic transformation of agency (others and themselves) are often short-lived and likely to become the recipients of the animus of the eventually empowered victims of the 'original victory'. **What are the strategic implications of this insight?** Clearly, success could easily be achieved by a powerful group if it is willing to impose its will on others. Strategically, though, the objective should not be victory, but the successful pursuit of interests and the promotion of ideas. The message and strategic objective, which is not easy to achieve, is that the successful agent of self-interest is the one which has a long-term vision which incorporates an anticipation and facilitates 'the other'. Failure is morphogenetically conditioned by ignoring 'the other' and the strategically competent agent will, second only to his/her own interests, know the needs and interests of the 'significant other' in the interaction situation. Not only will the competent agent know who are the significant others of the moment but also who has the potential to emerge, under which conditions, to positions of

significance.

None of this is possible to know fully, but the strategic option for negotiation, instead of coercion or domination, makes available social mechanisms and processes whereby knowledge of 'the other' can be enhanced through exchange. Through exchange, agents gain greater insight into the context of interaction, acquire a greater capacity to understand the other and can see the good reasons to adapt actions aimed at 'original' objectives to suit objectives that can be set in a changed context. Through negotiation, agents actually change the logic of the situation: good reasons for taking a hard-line become redundant and good reasons for compromise emerge.

This, more than anything else, means that knowing when to compromise and being willing to compromise becomes essential for successful agency. While powerful social agents may appear to be successful when they refuse to 'bring the other in' through compromise, they are very often making the vital contribution to their own failure by planting the seeds of opposition and resistance in the relationship with 'the other'.

The strategic value of compromise: The ideological purist might disdain compromise and insist upon rigid adherence to a strategy demanded by an ideology, but the same purist

might also founder on the rocks of unrealistic expectation of total success. It appears that history makers need to consider carefully the wisdom of acting 'low' while not losing sight of 'higher' aims. This advice could be interpreted in a number of ways. A first interpretation could suggest that they might need to consider compromising their loftier aims in order to achieve short-term and more realistic goals; thus they might need to consider the wisdom of backing away from the primary target and aiming at a secondary and more accessible target. They could do this in at least two different ways: 1. they could treat symptoms rather than treat the disease or 2. they could shift from attempts to change the whole to change part of the whole.

A second interpretation is one that suggests that it is desirable to pursue specific struggles for change while keeping the whole in mind, and it warns of the looming failure inherent in narrow and overly self-centred agency. By specific struggles one would mean struggles for educational transformation by any marginalized agent, for instance, feminists, non-racialists, workerists etc. and by the whole, one could, for instance think in terms of the building of an inclusive national education system.

To illustrate what is meant, I will consider the implications of the above insight in terms of strategies for transformation of education in South Africa. I will refer to

my comments (1993: 96-97) on a recent paper by Nomathamasanga Tisani (1993: 89-95) entitled *Striking a Balance in Education Through the Participation of Women*. The paper by Tisani contains the regular and justifiable call for the greater appreciation of women in the education sphere, but my comments apply in a more general sense.

Tisani (1993) rightly identifies the patriarchal character of education in South Africa as a particular problem. However, an awareness of the difference between specific and general struggles, combined with Archer's views about education systems, leads to the question of whether it is not inappropriate to focus on imbalance (of whatever kind) in the current circumstances. Such an emphasis may be described as inappropriate and strategically short-sighted, since it places the focus on the specific struggle at the expense of the overall social transformation whereby unwanted systemic outcomes are conditioned.

To explain the above statement, one could start with the concept **education system**. Taken from the work of Archer (1984), one would define an education system as "a nationwide, differentiated collection of institutions devoted to formal education, whose overall control and supervision is at least partly governmental, and whose component parts and processes are related to one another" (p.19). One need not be an expert on education systems to realize that

educational provision in South Africa deviates significantly from such an arrangement. South African education can be described as a **monopolistic** situation in which one particular group virtually monopolizes formal instruction, with the implication that education is firmly linked to only a single part of the total social structure, namely the institution with which the dominant group is associated (Archer, 1984: 22). The apartheid-state as monopolized by Afrikaner Nationalists is structured on the basis of a complex of ideas that justify a social order in which all spheres of society are under the controlling power of white Afrikaner males. The rest of society is excluded from structures of power.

Thus, the problem is one of **exclusion rather than imbalance**. Or stated differently: the problem is the absence of a 'system' and not the features of the system. The fundamental solution to our education problems, therefore, begins with undoing the control of the monopolist and replacing it with a proper state education system -and it is then, strictly speaking, only in the context of a 'system' that we should start talking about questions of balance. A description of the current situation in terms of im/balance is not incorrect, but it is so limited that it could leave one with the impression that all that needs to be done to resolve the education crisis is to shift and change emphasis within the existing framework. Or to put it differently, a

focus on im/balance could create the impression that the South African education crisis will be solved once specific struggles have achieved their successful outcome. From the current study, one has learned that struggles which are specifically and narrowly self-centred in their definition are doomed to eventual failure.

At the risk of oversimplifying matters, imbalance is an outcome of the dynamics within a system, and balance, while an empirical rarity in real life, could be the approximate outcome of complex interaction among diverse forces in the education system.

The question of balance is, nevertheless, relevant at the moment but the debate must be refocussed on the **process** of establishing an education system. I suggest that the balance that must be sought lies between specific struggles and the work to build a system. That means that while creating an education system, one will have to deal with the legacy of the past, and at the same time ask questions about who are legitimate participants in a national education system. Clearly there is tension between these two concerns, i.e. redress and systemic inclusivity. While the historically advantaged do have a legitimate stake in an inclusive state system, they would be inclined to use their enhanced capacity to retain greater say in a state system and thereby leave less space for redress. One could then argue that

throughout the process of the creation of an education system, those excluded in the past must accept responsibility to struggle for their specific inclusion and advancement. While there are new opportunities for the historically excluded which did not exist in the past, education is and will always be a contested terrain. Those who gained in the past will fight to hold on to their privileges, and those who claim their fair share will have to assert themselves in order to achieve that.

This is, then, where the challenge of social and institutional transformation comes in, i.e. to strike a balance between the specific struggles of redress and the building of a system, while avoiding the perpetuation of structural imbalance. Even for those who work for redress, the objective should be to create an 'education system' which will ~~even~~ accommodate the (reasonable) demands of the historically advantaged; it will require the type of interaction referred to earlier, i.e. reciprocal exchange based on the willingness to compromise and to be influenced by 'the other'. Looking at it from the point of view of those who are interested in redress, possibly the most practical way to strike the balance would demand that those intent on redress work as hard to establish an inclusive national education system as they work for the pursuit of specific outcomes. To repeat the earlier statement: one should pursue specific struggles for change while keeping

the whole in mind, and remain wary of the looming failure inherent in narrow and overly self-centred agency. This is not an idealistic and naive remark, but one borne out by recent events in the South African society. Moreover, it is more of a strategic statement than an 'altruistic' statement. The realization that 'the system' is something bigger than specific interests being satisfied need not (and should not) prevent interest-based struggles from going on, but could induce a sense of self-limitation into our specific struggles, which could have the unintended outcome of ensuring their success beyond the first direct confrontation.

The work done for this study has already been applied with success in specific contexts. The best illustration of this is the work over the 1992-3 period in order to transform the University of Port Elizabeth from an institution bearing all the features of one created for apartheid purposes, to a more plural and open institution. Not only did the morphogenetic logic contribute immensely to my own strategic capacity as a participant in this process, but it has led to outcomes which confirm the above arguments. The best illustration is the process by which a new Vice-Chancellor was elected by the end of 1993.

For the first time in South African university history, the spectrum of 'stakeholders', from the traditional

establishment interest groups to the variety of internal and external groups who were excluded in the past, participated in the process. Without it being explicitly stated, the morphogenetic approach served as the guiding model for the process as it became conceptualized over a number of months. The proposal on which the eventual democratic process was based, and the criteria upon which the nominated candidates were evaluated, were essentially drafted by the main external grouping (the so-called Broad Democratic Movement or BDM) and tabled in a negotiation forum. As an example of self-limiting and 'systemic' thinking beyond specific struggles, this proposal, made by an agent of a specific range of interests, called for a process which included the participation of all stakeholders. The situational logic allowed for a proposal whereby the historically excluded succeeded in taking a position where the existing authorities felt that it would be in their own interest to let this specific group into the decision-making process. The typical self-centred and strategically short-sighted agents would have used this opportunity to go for victory. Criteria for evaluation could have been defined in a narrow and self-centred way, but instead they were drafted with compromise, inclusivity and reciprocal interaction in mind.

Instead of 'grabbing' the more dramatic option which could have meant short-term victory, the BDM decided to compromise and rather secure a toned-down long-term outcome. The more

attractive but self-centred approach would have given the historically excluded groupings a once-off moment of glory. It would have been limited because it would have been devoid of reciprocal interaction in which whereby all those who participated in the final decision-making could have been influenced by one another, thereby ensuring a degree of commitment by all participants to the outcome.

After a remarkable process, ten interest groups, equally represented but significantly different in relation to the University, arrived at an almost complete consensus! Further detail of the process need not detain us here, and all factors are not accounted for in this discussion, but the important point is that through interaction, many of the otherwise uncompromising and antagonistic parties were transformed, even if only in a very limited sense, to achieve an outcome that served to satisfy most. The all-out victory of any single group would have been short-lived, since the other interested parties have sufficient capacity to undermine any dominant agent.

Finally, then, what is so important about the notion of the transformation of agency is its relation to the success or failure of agency. Regardless of how well agents (dominant or oppositional) think through and plan their projects for social transformation, they themselves are bound to change as an outcome of the self-same process whereby they effect

changes in their social environment. On the basis of this study one could infer that to be successful, agents should recognize and anticipate their own transformation; they should enhance their own capacity to adapt skilfully by using the information that they receive, through reciprocal interaction with 'the other'. 'Letting the other in' becomes crucial for long-term survival. It means, however, that success has to be redefined, i.e. not to be seen as victory in terms of static 'original' self-centred objectives; successful agents in complex situations never become so self-centred or fixated that they cannot change direction or even reverse from a course taken. Successful agents know how to compromise. Social and institutional reconstruction in a society like South Africa should be pursued with the need in mind to facilitate ongoing transformation. Transformation should be viewed as inherent in ongoing exchange between diverse groups; transformation of the self need not be viewed as fatal failure, but is to be seen as ongoing adaptation in the context of dynamic relations. If success is then related to the ability to change and not so much to score decisive victories, failure should be redefined as the inability or refusal to adapt strategically to the inevitable complexities that emerge from interaction.

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